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THE

MISCELLANEOUS

WORKS

OF

MR JAMES MEIKLE,

LATE SURGEON IN CARNWATH.

CONTAINING

ALL HIS REMAINING PIECES IN PROSE INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION.

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IM-

IMPROVEMENT

FOR

ETERNITY;

OR,

THE VAST CONCERN

OF THE

RATIONAL WORLD.

A

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT an excellent creature was man at firſt created! when heaven was in his eye, and God had all his ſoul! Well might the *ſons of God* ſhout for joy, when this cope-ſtone of the lower creation was laid; well might the *morning-ſtars* ſing together at that honour and comely majeſty that was put upon him. But how is this *ſon of the morning* fallen! How is he alienated from the life of God! How does he neglect the inviſible realities of eternity for the periſhing trifles of time! Nor are the worldlings only guilty of this eſtrangement from the heavenly frame of ſoul. Even the ſaints themſelves, who ſhould preſs forward "to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus," retain too, too much of this inbred carnality; and the things of time ſhine too bright in their eyes to be accounted dung and loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus. Though, the ſeed of God being

implanted by the Spirit in them, they ſhall never finally fall away, but ſhall *improve for eternity;* yet did they purſue it continually, the weak might grow as David, and the houſe of David as the angel of God. Sometimes the ſaints may find a melting of heart at the throne of grace, as the wax melts before the fire; but when the duty is over, the frame is fled, away they go, and God is too ſeldom in their thoughts, perhaps, from their morning to their evening prayer. The affairs of life confuſe them, and a throng of buſineſs hurries them away from God. Few or none, like Moſes, bring the ſhining ſplendour of communion from the Mount with them in their face, in their converſation. The pious perſon would not only have Chriſt to his own ſoul, but to his houſe, to his family and friends, his acquaintance and countrymen; and would account it his greateſt joy to ſee Immanuel's glory "cover the heaven, and the earth full of his praiſe; to ſee his kingdom enlarged from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

It is hard for the Chriſtian to get his heart ſo diſengaged from the world, but that, ſome time or other, like Iſrael with the fleſh-pots in Egypt, it will remember, recoil towards, and feel after it; and will have too great delight in, deſire after, or diſquiet for want of ſome of its good things. This natural inclination after things below makes us forget the things above. This brings leanneſs on our ſouls, and a feebleneſs into all our ſpiritual powers. One thing here is very hurtful to the Chriſtian, and that is, a being *content* if a ſaint, though of the leaſt magnitude. But ſuch *contentment* is very oppoſite to the aſpiring principle of love. The eye that is ſpiritually illuminated will never be ſatisfied with

with seeing the beauties of Jesus, nor the ear with hearing the praises of our incarnate God. It is the nature of true grace to pant after "the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus." Being assured of salvation, is no argument against improving for eternity, but rather the opposite. Thus, the heir-apparent of a crown may provide life-guards and armies, horses and chariots, and all the regalia of kings, which it would be downright madness in a private person to do. So an heir of heaven, an expectant of glory, should meditate much on that state of glory which he is shortly to be possessed of. Are not the children of this world wiser in their generation than the children of light? See the man on whom the stores of India pour, how he grasps greedily for more, and, like the grave, cries, *Give*, and never says it is *enough*. No wonder there be different degrees of glory among the saints in heaven. How will Enoch, the heavenly-minded Enoch, who walked with God three hundred years, outshine a generation of such Christians as are in our day! Now, the great rock on which many dash, and are almost shipwrecked, is the world; many, I say, of those that seem to improve for eternity. Yea, lawful business, unlawfully, unseasonably, or too anxiously pursued, is a gilded bait that conveys ruin to many a soul. No situation, no change of circumstances, mends the matter, where the world is seated in the affections; for in prosperity it puffs up the carnal mind, and in adversity it pains the carnal spirit; so that, however the world goes, it goes always ill with the worldling. The things of time occupy our thoughts too much, when we have not a thought to occupy about eternity, whither we are bound. Our cursed desire after riches, greatness, and renown, is the very reason why

we miſs true riches, eternal greatneſs, and permanent renown; but happy they who, in view of eternity, regard not the world's frowns, nor believe its ſmiles, but, angel-like, live above them both, and, in this elevated ſtate of mind, improve for eternity.

Now, that we may be perſuaded to this duty of *living as it were in eternity*, and convinced that it is the excellency of a Chriſtian ſo to live, we ſhall view the things that draw us aſide, and impede our walking with God, and weigh them in an even balance, and if found wanting caſt them away. And this ſhall be in a few meditations, firſt on worldly things in their vanity, then on heavenly things in their glory. But here the author begs leave to make an obſervation or two:

1. That he intends not to inculcate a ſupine negligence about the affairs of this life, an overlooking of temporal mercies, or a ſtoical ſtupidity about the croſſes or afflictions of this ſtate; he would only have himſelf and others never to expect heaven on earth, nor take it ill when diſappointed.

2. The author cries down the world, neither from *pet* nor *diſappointment*, for he has in *poſſeſſion* or *expectation* a good portion of thoſe worldly enjoyments, the vanity of which he would fain expoſe; and therefore writes not out of ill-nature, like thoſe that undervalue and hold things cheap, merely becauſe they cannot attain to them, but that he may never overvalue what he has in poſſeſſion; never be too much pained when his expectations are diſappointed, and when deprived of what he poſſeſſes. And,

Finally, as he believes the *paſſions*, *appetites*, and *plagues* of his heart, are not peculiar to himſelf alone, but epidemical among thouſands of his brethren of mankind,

mankind, therefore he would be glad that all in the ſame circumſtances ſhould partake of his *preservatives*, and be advantaged by his *antidotes*, under the divine bleſſing.

IM-

IMPROVEMENT

FOR

ETERNITY, &c.

MEDITATION I.

ON THE VANITY OF RICHES.

THE carnal mind thinks nothing can give happineſs but riches, and yet none are greater ſtrangers to happineſs than the rich; for how difficult is it for the rich man to be the religious man too! to ſerve God, and be ſerved of Mammon! But, as my depraved appetite is after periſhing clay, not for the preſent neceſſary ſupply, which is lawful, but for times unknown, and heirs unborn, to be as it were independent of Providence, let me candidly examine into riches, that I may ſee their vanity.

Now, I ſee that they are, 1. Dangerous. 2. Deceitful; 3. Empty and unſatisfactory; and, 4. Periſhing and tranſitory.

1. They are dangerous both to body and to ſoul. (1.) To the body. The rich is hated and envied, ſometimes robbed by the way, and ſlain, while the poor walk along the high road as ſecure as a king in the midſt of his guards, and with leſs confuſion. Had Naboth's

both's indigence deprived him of his vineyard ſooner, in the courſe of things he had poſſeſſed his life longer.

While the houſes of the opulent are marked out by the thieving gang for the nocturnal attack, the poor man, that has not perhaps a ſhilling in his cuſtody, goes to bed ſecurely, ſleeps quietly, and awakes in ſafety. If, in famine, the poor feel the evil arrows thereof, in the calamity of war the rich are the greateſt ſufferers. By riches here I mean a large overplus of all worldly good things, above what he needs or expends in his ſtation; for no particular ſum can be called riches; a Duke may be poor with his ten thouſand a year, while a private perſon may grow rich on an hundred.

Again, riches abuſed have brought many to their grave. The *ſurfeit* and the *debauch*, things too well known among the better (I had almoſt ſaid the more brutiſh) part of mankind, have ſhortened the life of thouſands. It were telling numbers that poverty circumſcribed their appetite. Many, in making wings to their riches, plant their health and conſtitution, their name and character, and often their life alſo, among the feathers, and all fly off together. How often do the impious heirs of many a fine eſtate in a few years ſpend the induſtry of ages, and have no *reverſion* but a broken conſtitution, a bad character, and a black conſcience. Many entail, with their eſtates, a feeble conſtitution, and the ſeeds of many diſeaſes; for ſome in high life live not only faſt for themſelves, but for their poſterity.

(2.) Riches are dangerous to the ſoul; for they not only give an opportunity to purſue ſinful pleaſures, but force us to enjoy lawful things in too great a meaſure, till the ſoul is led far away from God, and is chargeable with being "a lover of pleaſures, more than a lover of

of God." It is rare to be high in the world, and humble in ſpirit; rich in time, and rich in faith. How many, in the great day, ſhall curſe the riches which they now idolize, the grandeur they adore, and wiſh their embroidered robes had been a patch of rags, and their honorary titles epithets of ridicule! Would not my ambition introduce me into the preſence of my ſovereign, detain me at his court, and make me intermeddle with the affairs of the kingdom? but would not my corruption greatly hinder me to *acquaint myſelf with God*, the King eternal, immortal, and inviſible, perfections of which no king can boaſt, *whereby good ſhould ſurely come to me.* Attendance on an earthly throne, ſuch is my depravity, might impede my preſſing for nearneſs to the throne of grace, and communion with God.

Again, riches make me value myſelf more than I ought; for we commonly value ourſelves according to what we *have*, not according to what we *are*, otherwiſe we ſhould always be humble. Thus, by my high opinion of myſelf, I am ranked among "the proud, whom God knoweth afar off."

Again, the more riches, the greater account I have to make to God; for not one farthing of my yearly thouſands is allowed to be conſumed on my luſts, or to be laid out on vanity, while a fellow-creature is in real want. Yet I may live according to my ſtation.

But might not riches enable me to ſerve God better, to be more uſeful to others, to relieve the poor, aſſiſt the oppreſſed, and do many good actions? True, O my ſoul! ſome ſuch inſtances have been, but ſeldom do men, even good men, make the beſt uſe of riches. It is eaſy to think how I could do much good with riches, if

if I had them, but not ſo eaſy to do as I ſhould when I have them. Often riches and niggardlineſs come together, ſo that, though they fill the hand, they do not open the heart, or make the man more liberal.

But are not riches better than extreme poverty? But what is extreme poverty? I have known a perſon who thus expreſſed himſelf: "I have often eaten my dinner, and but a homely and ſcanty one too, without knowing how I was to ſup; and ſometimes gone ſupperleſs to bed, without knowing of my breakfaſt. I have worn out ſhoes and cloaths, without knowing how to be provided in others. I have been within a few days of the term of removal, without knowing of a houſe to dwell in; have had demands of juſt debts made upon me, and had not a penny to pay, nor knew what hand to turn to; yet I dare not call this extreme poverty, for I was honeſtly carried through all, though ſuch trials I have had for years. On the other hand, (continues the ſame perſon), I have dwelt in mine own houſe, without any trouble at the approaching term, have had my table covered with moderate plenty, changes of apparel, and money in my poſſeſſion, yet no demands made upon me. But my experience can call the afflicted ſtate the beſt ſtate, for thus I was prepared for the proſperous."

In low circumſtances, the ſoul is led out to God, but in plenty is apt to be led aſide to the creature. How beautiful is that continual diſplay of God's fatherly care, who is at the pains, ſo to ſpeak, to hand-feed his children, while his providence, like Elijah's raven, brings ſomething in the morning, and ſomething at night, day after day; juſt the preſent neceſſity ſupplied, and no more in ſight. Thus to-day's proviſion bids me hope for to-morrow;

to-morrow

to morrow comes, and I am provided for, which makes me ſtill hope for the time to come; thus faith becomes as it were a trading grace, begs daily at the gate of heaven, and is not denied. He that has nothing but changes before him, hangs on God alone, while he that has no changes fears not God.

Again, riches force men into a confuſion of affairs, and keep them in a hurry of buſineſs, which conſumes the ſpare hours that they ſhould ſpend with God, and in improvement for eternity. Not that any man is to neglect the buſineſs of life, by which he muſt live honeſtly in the world, and ſerve his generation; but, of all employments, let me chuſe that by which I may live moſt retired from the world, and wait with feweſt diſtractions on God. And woe to that man in whom the love of the world has more place than the love of the Father! How often, through hurry of buſineſs, is family-worſhip neglected in the morning or evening, or both. Many hurry to the ſhop or counting-houſe, without paſſing through the cloſet!

Again, what care and diſquietude attend on riches! Here one who had a large ſum of money of mine turns bankrupt, and I feel more than the man that never had a farthing to lend. Thus I find,

2. That riches are deceitful. Every man expects happineſs in riches, but no man finds it; nay, ſays Solomon, "the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer them to ſleep." O the golden dreams that men have while labouring to be rich! health of body, tranquillity of mind, a ſplendid houſe, a fat table, a grand retinue, many dear friends, noble connections, and univerſal acquaintance. Well, ſomehow he hits on the golden mine, and becomes immenſely rich, but very miſerable!

His health yields to ſurfeit and debauch; his mind is all tumult and diſtreſs, which it ſeeks to ſhun by being abſent from itſelf. His ſplendid houſe is a rendezvous for fox-hunters and horſe-racers; his fat table, and grand retinue, will ſoon make his eſtate lean enough; and his dear friends, noble connections, and univerſal acquaintance, will every now and then, in ſome point, give him pain, and ſoon make him drop all acquaintance for the ſolitude of a jail. If riches gave felicity, the richeſt would be the happieſt man, but the experience of all ages contradicts this. But, not to ſtay,

3. Riches are empty and unſatisfactory. What more can the rich have than food and raiment? Is not the homely food the more wholeſome? Is not the coarſe garment as good to defend from cold as the embroidered robe? No ſum can bribe diſeaſe or death. The gout, the gravel, will attack the king on the throne, as well as the beggar on the dunghill. It is nothing to nature, if ſhe be ſatisfied, whether the dinner conſiſts of one or of ten covers, and whether the drink be wine or water; no matter whether the houſe be more or leſs elegant, if it ſhelter from the ſtorm. A whole eſtate cannot purchaſe peace of mind to the proprietor; and the leaſt ſatisfaction is often found by thoſe who poſſeſs the greateſt ſums. Nay, riches, like the dropſy, while they increaſe, create a craving appetite ſtill for more. Hence, where is the man that ſays, I have enough? Their abuſe may trouble my conſcience, but can give no peace there. Tranquillity of mind and true ſatisfaction increaſe not with our ſums. Such *lowness of ſpirits* has attacked ſome men in high life, and of opulent fortunes, that they have diſpatched themſelves, to be out of their preſent anguiſh, regardleſs of an awful hereafter!

hereafter! Very moderate incomes will procure all the neceſſaries of life, and more than that is often to the diſadvantage of the poſſeſſor; ſo that an inſatiable appetite after riches is a great proof of a wrong judgement, weak grace, and ſtrong corruption. It is little ſatisfaction to the humane landlord, to drive an unfortunate tenant to the *horn*, and his ſmall family to miſery; little pleaſure to the compaſſionate creditor to divide the laſt ſhilling of an honeſt bankrupt. The food is as palatable, and the cloaths are as warm, the mind is as tranquil, and the countenance as ſerene, with a moderate ſupply, as with the greateſt abundance. Let four men ſet out on a journey; one travels on foot, another on horſeback, a third in a chaiſe drawn by two, and attended by one ſervant behind, and a fourth in a coach drawn by ſix, and attended by four ſervants; they arrive at the inns, and are lodged according to their rank. Well, I doubt not but the foot-traveller ſleeps as ſound, awakes next morning as compoſed, and purſues his journey with as much pleaſure, as any of the other three. And I am ſure, when all travellers arrive at the grave, that the poor will lie as ſoft in a mean, as the nobleman in a marble tomb, and may perhaps riſe with more compoſure in the morning of the reſurrection than the other.

Again, riches are not real, but relative to our expences. A voluptuary, like ſome of the Roman emperors, can gormandize whole kingdoms, while a moderate perſon can appear elegant on a ſmall eſtate, and not ruin it. Here a ruſtic is paſſing rich with ten pounds a-year, while in the neighbourhood a nobleman, with ten thouſand a-year, runs into debt, and, though almoſt incredible, becomes bankrupt. Here one be-

comes ſenſibly richer, but his expences inſenſibly increaſe, ſo that he is little better than before; ſo ſays Solomon, "When goods are increaſed, they are increaſed that eat them; and what profit hath the owner of them, ſave the beholding them with the eye?" There a man ſucceſsful in buſineſs adds to his capital every year, till he becomes very rich, but is he more benevolent than before, more an almoner to the poor, more the pattern of virtue, the ſupport of the oppreſſed, and the friend of mankind, than before? Is there any additional glow made to his gratitude heavenward? any increaſe to the graces of his ſoul, or the peace of his mind? If not, inſtead of boaſting of his riches, he has reaſon to fear that the ruſt of them will riſe againſt him in the day of judgement.

A man that has no eſtate thinks he could be both happy and content with a very ſmall one; but if not happy in what we have, we will never be happy in what we have not. Satisfaction is ſtill placed in a ſum of which we are not poſſeſſed. A man with five hundred a-year places ſatisfaction in a thouſand; he that has a thouſand fixes it at five thouſand; he that has five, at ten; he that has ten thouſand, at twenty; and he that has the greateſt ſum, at an income ſtill above him, ſtill beyond him. O to place our full ſatisfaction in the heavenly inheritance, and when we come to poſſeſſion, we ſhall not be diſappointed.

Sometimes a man, by leaving his widow in opulent circumſtances, puts it in her power to make ſome low, diſhonourable match, and wound his memory when he is no more. Thus, alſo, the heirs of ſome rich men, by ſquandering all away, have only reflected diſgrace on their progenitors. It is not in the nature of the creature

to

to give satisfaction to an immortal soul, therefore in vain we seek it.

4. Riches are uncertain, and soon gone; they cannot go with us beyond the grave, and are often quite gone from us long before we have finished our journey. No human sagacity can secure our riches for ourselves, or for our heirs. We may entail our estate, and so prevent its being sold, but cannot keep our son or grandson from lying in jail for debt; thus the design of our entail, which was to secure riches and felicity to our posterity, is made abortive, while, though the lands remain, the heir is miserable, who curses the entail, which prevents him from paying his debts, or providing for a needy family. Here a man, in his own lifetime, makes an estate, and his son, or grandson, in half his lifetime spends it, and descends to his original level with greater shame than his ancestor had honour in rising above it. The very means of acquiring our wealth, dealing in the stocks, an extensive foreign or sea trade, a share in a bank, working some mines, &c. sometimes on a sudden deprive us of all we have. Men's affairs are so interwoven with one another, that one capital dealer, or capital house failing, has been the ruin of numbers. Nay, a person being surety for some friend in office, which he looked upon merely as a piece of form, has thereby been ruined at last. Some have gathered riches with pleasure, to lose them with pain. Alas! shall I mention what I have known? Here are two persons of equal rank; one is pinched from year to year, but content; the other is prosperous, amasses a great sum, and sets it to interest, and, it seems, sets his heart on it; the banker fails, and a great part of it will be lost; yet his circumstances are still better than those of his poor neighbour;

but diſcontent, and a dread of poverty, raiſes a tumult in the unhappy ſoul, and makes him, with his own hand, put an end to his life. And this day would not the ſad friends of the rich perſon gladly drop the connection, and become the relations of the poor, creditable man? and alſo barter the golden bags with his tranquil poverty! Some men rapidly riſe to their meridian of riches, as comets approach the ſun, and as quickly ſink again when God blows upon their ſubſtance in the day of his wrath. This is ſtrange, but true, that few or no poor men become bankrupt; they are men of large capitals, who either launch out too far, or are unfortunate, and men of great eſtates; for whatever our incomes are, it is poſſible to live above them till reduced. So uncertain are riches, that in ſeeking more, and that lawfully too, we may loſe what we have. Thus, a law-ſuit for what is unjuſtly taken away may take away the little that remains, or a contention for trifles may ruin both parties. A contract for a public building, a bridge, or a pier, which promiſes well, by a falſe foundation, a flood, or ſome accident, may turn out a loſs to the contractor, which he is never able to recover.

No man can ſecure his riches. He may be infatuated ſo that he may become ſurety for the fraudulent, or for the opulent, who may, by being bail for others, be not only reduced himſelf, but ruin his friend, to whom he meant no harm. A ſtorm at ſea has ſhipwrecked many a flouriſhing family! What numbers has a war between nations ruined! An inundation of water may ruin an eſtate; a whirlwind may cover the fertile plain with barren ſand; and a flood may ſpread the low ground with moſs, and render uſeleſs the arable land.

land. An earthquake may ſwallow up our poſſeſſions, throw down our houſes, bury ourſelves in the ruins, and alter the beds of rivers; and an hurricane may tear up our plantations, beat down our dwellings, and do much miſchief to many. A careleſs ſervant, or a flaſh of lightning, may conſume our houſes, our flocks may periſh in the ſtorms of winter, our cattle may die of diſeaſes, and a few days froſt too early in the harveſt may blaſt the crop and the hope of the huſbandman together; while the rigorous contributions of an enemy ſpread terror and poverty wherever they appear. By the bite of a mad dog, a man may loſe all his beſtial, while ſome of his family are alſo in danger. Sickneſs or diſeaſe in a family, or on a man's ſelf, may reduce him to narrow circumſtances; the loſs of a limb, or of eye-ſight, or of health, may render a man, once moderately rich, very indigent. Frequent deaths in a family are always attended with lamentation and expences, often too great to be borne.

Say now, what ſagacity can foreſee, what power prevent, the decay of our ſubſtance, and the waſte of our wealth? The richeſt contract makes not always the richeſt teſtament; this is a proverb: and the richeſt men have often the pooreſt heirs; this may appear a paradox, but, puffed up with the proſpect of their large fortunes, they are often diſſolute, prodigal, and imprudent, and ſo ſpend in a few years the induſtry of ages. I am not ſurpriſed to ſee the poſterity of a miſer, who made a god of his gold, of an oppreſſor, who robbed the poor, and of a covetous cheat, who defrauded all he dealt with, ſoon become poor, for the curſe of heaven is an inviſible moth that conſumes all. A man is very anxious to make an eſtate for his ſon, and a rich portion for his daughters.

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The ſon ſucceeds to it, and ſquanders all away, while his ſchool-fellows, who were only put into buſineſs, live in eaſy circumſtances. The daughters, if their fortunes are great, are juſt a prey for fortune-hunters; the giddy-headed girls are caught in the ſnare, and in a ſhort time, but too late, find their portions ſpent, and their perſons deſpiſed, by the men whom they took for huſbands! But, moreover, I am not ſurpriſed that the poſterity of the godly ſometimes are reduced to poverty, as the parents might too much place the ſecurity and felicity of their children in what they themſelves had provided, and ſo not have a proper reliance on Providence; and ſince, though their patrimony be ſpent, the providence of the God of their fathers is an inexhauſtible ſtore, and whatever ſtraits they may have here, the heavenly inheritance will enrich for ever, if they ſeek the God of their fathers.

In a word, Is the converſation of the rich more upright than the poor? is their countenance more ſerene? is their conſcience more tranquil? is their departure more pleaſant, and their reſurrection more glorious? If not, I ſhould not be anxious to be rich; but if theſe things are rather the reverſe with the wicked, I ſhould ſtill be leſs anxious to be rich, and hear the word of truth, "Labour not to be rich: They that will be rich fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into divers fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which *drown* men in deſtruction and perdition." Will a man riſk drowning to bring up a bag of gold from a deep river? No; but here it is certain, that theſe unſanctified affections drown men in endleſs perdition. The rich come poor into the world, and go poor out of the world, for he can carry nothing hence, when death ends his days. It is below the ſoul

that

that has taken God for his provider and portion through the unknown ages of eternity, to truſt to dead, deceitful, and uncertain riches, and not in the living and faithful God, who gives us all good things, life, health, ſtrength, uſe of our members and organs, exerciſe of reaſon, and liberty, with (which is more than all) the means of ſalvation, richly to enjoy. Can a man that enjoys theſe, with food though moderate, and raiment though mean, be thought leſs than rich? while he that has all ſums without theſe muſt be but poor. Now, how reaſonable to truſt in God, (who gives ſo much), that he will give what more he ſees meet. Thus, while we receive theſe ſmall pittances with the heavenly bleſſing, when theſe pittances come to a period, the bleſſing that enriches the ſoul attends us to the other world. There is a ſore evil that often attends riches, that the man who has no neceſſity to ſupply, no near heir to enrich, is the moſt parſimonious, and the moſt anxious to increaſe his ſtore. The riches of time, even the greateſt ſums, are cankered and moth-eaten, but the treaſures of Providence are inexhauſtible.

Finally, How ſoon ſhall I, and all my brethren of mankind, be fixed in our eternal ſtate? And there the riches of Crœſus cannot make one miſerable ſoul happy, nor the poverty of Job one happy ſoul miſerable. The grandeur of an hour, and the ſorrow of a night-watch, are wholly loſt in theſe eternal ages of felicity or anguiſh.

MEDI-

MEDITATION II.

THE VANITY OF RELATIONS.

Nov. 21. 1776.

Though the bounty of Heaven ſets the ſolitary in families, and bleſſes us with friends and relations, yet, if we build on them, independent of the heavenly favour, we forget ourſelves, and offend God.

1. My relations, the neareſt and deareſt, after living long in peace and harmony, may have ſome croſs events thrown in their way, that may ſour their temper, and eſtrange their affection. The neareſt relations, ſuch as huſband and wife, whoſe affection ſhould be moſt tender, and their mutual forbearance the largeſt, are (ſuch is our corruption) readieſt to think themſelves aggrieved, and to be in a paſſion, till they learn one another's temper.

2. I am not to expect to be happy above all men that are upon the face of the earth; therefore let me look round, and ſee the vexations that attend connections and relations. Are not the contentions of brothers, who ſhould live in unity, ſometimes "like the bars of a caſtle" for ſtrength? Has not a groundleſs law-ſuit among the branches of a family ſometimes ruined them all? Have not the diſguſts of thoſe who have been the offspring of the ſame parents, grown to that height, that they were not on ſpeaking terms? Has not the diſcordance of ſiſters, who ſhould be of a more amiable temper, made them commence ſcolds and barbarians to one another? Nay, thoſe very brothers, who, when young, fed at one table, have carried their reſentment to ſuch a pitch as to deprive one another of life. Relations, when living in amity, have the moſt glowing affections and tender regard to each other; but, like thoſe parts of the earth which

which in ſummer have the longeſt day, and in winter the longeſt night, they entertain, on their falling out, the bittereſt animoſities againſt each other, and are with the greateſt difficulty reconciled. A man that has neither brother nor ſiſter, nephew nor niece, may be thought to be very ſolitary, but is ſurely happy when compared to him who has a brother that will not ſee him, or admit him to his house.

But, ſuppoſing friendſhip to ſubſiſt among brothers and ſiſters, how muſt it pain the pious ſoul if any of them be openly irreligious, and be guilty of groſs ſins! Or, though civil among men, if they have no fear of God, what muſt they feel for them in ſecret! And, alas! where is the ſaint that has not ſorrow for his friends in this reſpect?

The deceit of a ſtranger is galling, but to be impoſed upon by a friend is intolerable. In paying up a ſmall portion or patrimony, or jointure, ſometimes ſo much fraud has appeared as has diſguſted a generous mind. And ſome, by cautionry or ſuretyſhip for their own, or their wife's neareſt friends, have been ruined.

One would think, that an increaſe of near relations would be an increaſe of happineſs; but, the ſad experience of many mothers-in-law, and daughters-in-law, from that very period dates their miſery; yea, the nearer they dwell together they grow the more enſtranged from one another in their affection, vexation being written on every relation under the ſun.

Would the heart of a ſavage not recoil at the conduct of ſome guardians towards their pupils; guardians ſo nearly related to the orphans, that both the deceaſed father and the law appoint them to their office. Yet, how is the helpleſs child fleeced by every method that has

has the face of law, and ſometimes ſent to foreign countries, or deprived of life, that the property or eſtate may devolve on the greedy guardian. Well may we, with the prophet of old, cry, "Truſt not in a friend." Our only ſafety will be in the protection of that "Friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother."

3. But though I ſhould admit that I may allow myſelf to have no great ſatisfaction in theſe lateral connections, yet, what happineſs may I not expect in children, mine own immediate deſcendants? Here, I own the expectation is higheſt, but the diſappointment is often the deepeſt. All human bliſs is greater in the proſpect than in the poſſeſſion; but heavenly bliſs is larger in the enjoyment than in the expectation. The married pair, if childleſs, anticipate much happineſs might they but embrace a ſon. A ſon is beſtowed; but their miſery, and not their felicity, comes along with him. He dies who is their only ſon, the ſon of their old age, and they almoſt die with grief, or go mourning to the grave. The happineſs which parents promiſe themſelves in children is ſtill future, is ſtill illuſive. As the boy thinks, if he were on the next hill, he might graſp the rainbow in his arms; he arrives, but the rainbow is as far from him as ever: Juſt ſo they think what a fine thing would it be to ſee the child that is now in ſwadling cloaths able to ſpeak and play about; when that comes, they lift their delight forward another ſtage, to his commencing ſchool-boy; and then to his entrance into life, and his ſettling in the world; but, ere this laſt ſtage arrives, the poor parents are, perhaps, arrived at their long-home.

One man has a family of fine children, but he knows not what to do with them, what buſineſs to ſet the ſons to;

to; the boys themſelves are at a loſs what to chuſe; and, in this caſe, they grow burdens to them that begat them. Another man puts his ſon to ſome lawful trade; the youth grows impatient of reſtraint, breaks his apprenticeſhip, runs off, and is not heard of for many years. A third has both ſons and daughters; but death, by repeated viſits, thins the little family, and the parents, with weeping eyes, find their ſeats at the table always empty; they fondly think they ſhould appear among their brothers and ſiſters, and ſhare as formerly in their ſmall preſents, but they are never more to be ſeen. Another has all his olive plants cut down, that lately encircled and beautified his table, and, on this account, is in ſuch bitterneſs of ſoul, that he refuſes to be comforted. Another, (for grief has many degrees), beſides the children of his own bowels, loſes the wife of his boſom, and is depreſſed beyond meaſure. One man has a ſon that is lame from the womb, or that becomes deformed by ſome accident. Another has ſome of his tender offſpring confined for years on a death-bed, and who at laſt expire in great pain. In one family, a child loſes its ſight by the ſmall pox; in another, the ear is ſhut up that it cannot hear; and, in a third, the pretty boy cannot utter a word. To one poor father a child is born with ſomething monſtrous, ſo that he is a gazing-ſtock wherever he goes. The ſon of another is an idiot, and the daily deriſion of an impious rabble. In the morning, the mother awakes to give ſuck to her babe, but the little creature is ſtiff in her arms, and ſhe torments herſelf with a thouſand ſtrugglings of ſoul. By a river or pit, a well, or a tub full of water, a child has been deprived of his life, and his parents drowned in tears, and torn with a thouſand fooliſh reflections. The

fall of a houſe, the going-off of a muſket, the caſting of a ſtone, the kick of a horſe, or the goring of a bull, have been the death of endearing relations, and all of a ſudden, to teach us that we muſt never boaſt of our friends.

What a load of care and anxiety hangs on the parents minds, firſt to get their children educated according to their ſtation, whether their children be ſons or daughters; and then to fix on an honeſt occupation for them, to enable them to live in the world! And, after that, has not an affectionate father ſometimes hurt his own circumſtances, to ſet his ſon up in trade? And this very ſon has turned out, in a ſhort ſpace, a bankrupt; and, by his conduct, brought the aged man with ſorrow to the grave. Do we not ſee in one family a fooliſh ſon, that can ſettle at nothing, nor chuſe any employment? In another, we find a ſon ſtubborn and diſobedient, a grief of mind daily to his parents; a third, who has had the portion of goods that fell to him given him, has ſoon ſquandered all, and run in debt with all that gave him credit, and then gone beyond ſeas for his ſafety. Here a wayward youth that has refuſed to obey the voice of his father and mother, will follow the ſound of the drum, and that to danger and death. Here one whoſe parents had put him in a way of doing well with reſpect to the world, ſquanders all, and, to make their grief complete, runs to the army. While the ſon of another, juſt when grown up to be able to help his father, flees to the ſea, and leaves the indigent parent angry at the ungrateful requital, and ſad for his ſon. Here a kind father finds a priſon, and loſes his eſtate or ſubſtance, by being ſurety for a fooliſh ſon.

Moreover, when thoſe children that have been the care

care and expectation of many years, come to ſettle in the world, how often do our fine proſpects diſappear! In one family, the ſon and heir, who was expected to match to the ſatisfaction of all his friends, marries an infamous wench. Another, in oppoſition to all his friends, marries much below his ſtation. In another, the favourite daughter runs off with a footman, and affronts herſelf and her friends. Here a girl, always obedient before, will not hear her parents advice, but marries a rake, and is ruined for ever. In one family, a ſon goes after lewd women, till he brings diſeaſe and diſgrace on himſelf, and ſorrow of heart to his parents; while, in another houſe, a daughter brings a baſtard into the family, and pours grief into every heart; and how ſharp ſuch a grief is, the experience of too many parents can tell.

But, ſuppoſe our ſons or daughters are married to our and their wiſh, what croſs events may occur! Their tempers may differ ſo widely, that peace and ſocial tranquillity cannot ſubſiſt. Loſſes in trade may make it neceſſary to give up houſe, and the poor woman may return to her father's poorer than ſhe left it; or the huſband may die, and ſhe may return a poor widow, with two or three helpleſs orphans. Or, ſuch bad uſage the woman may get, that ſhe is forced to ſeparate from her huſband. Or, he may be ſo open with his wickedneſs, that ſhe ſues for, and obtains a divorce. But, in ſuch a caſe, what muſt every friend feel, and what a mournful welcome muſt the parents give to their daughter returning in a ſtate worſe than widowhood! We ſhall find the ſon of another family married to one that ſhames all her friends, by getting drunk alone; and another, matched with one whoſe ill-nature and impudence

know no bounds, and daily affront her neareſt relatives. A third finds that the wife of his boſom, even after ſhe has born him children, breaks her oath, and defiles the marriage-bed. Nay, ſome women have been ſo abandoned as to leave huſband and children, and make an elopement with ſome gallant. So has the brutal huſband behaved to the wife of his youth, and his own offſpring, in forſaking her, and following lewd women. Has not the extravagance of one of the parties reduced the other to beggary, and filled all the friends with anxiety? Have not the relations of many reſpectable perſons forfeited their life to public juſtice for rebellion, murder, or theft? while others, regardleſs of their own character and ſoul, or the peace and credit of their neareſt kin, lay violent hands on themſelves. Some, after qualms of conſcience, and a ſeeming concern for ſalvation in their younger days, to the grief of their parents, grow openly profane. Nay, ſome ſons and daughters have been ſo brutiſh as to beat their aged parents, and, O horrid! to butcher them at length. Theſe inſtances are not the fruit of imagination, or of a gloomy mind, but of mournful obſervation.

4. Well, may ſome think, admit that I have little happineſs in children, or other relations, yet I muſt be happy in the wife of my boſom, who is mine own fleſh. Ah! no where are men more deceived than here. Unmindful that vanity and vexation are inlaid in every enjoyment under the ſun, they expect much, and poſſeſs little. Let us look around, and among our acquaintance we ſhall find many blanks, briers, and thorns in that ſtate. Among ſome, all that exceſs of affection that once ſeemed to be mutual, is converted into a lukewarm kindneſs, formal civility, or cold indifferency. Among others,

others, matters are ſtill worſe, and there is little ſympathy or endeavour to conceal one another's faults; while, in a third houſe, ſtrife and contention come into the place of peace and tranquillity. In another, all ſenſe of religion and gratitude in one of the parties is loſt; the other endeavours to be kind, dutiful, and endearing, but it only heightens the diſguſt. Here a poor woman finds ſuch cruel treatment, that ſhe is obliged to leave, with reluctance, her huſband and his houſe, and ſeek a refuge elſewhere; while there the huſband flees from the ſhame and calamities brought on him by his wife, to dwell where he was never known. In one word, ſhall I mention how many have loſt their life by thoſe very perſons, who, by their oath, and in honour were bound to be their protectors? Thus, "a man's foes have been the men of his own houſe." But, granting that religion rules in the hearts of the married pair, ſtill there may as much corruption and ill-nature lodge there, as, though it cannot be the death of true grace, may be the deſtruction of family-peace, and a grief of heart to the perſons ſelves in their better moments.

But what conſtant grief of heart, what growing anguiſh, and ſoul-bitterneſs, muſt thoſe perſons feel, who have the fear of God in their hearts, and are unequally yoked with unbelievers! Indeed, their ſorrows ſhould fall in tears before the throne of grace, and their ſighs in petitions to the compaſſionate Saviour; "for what knoweſt thou, O man! but thou ſhalt ſave thy wife? or what knoweſt thou, O wife! but thou ſhalt ſave thy huſband?" Again, have not the married pair, who have been long happy in each other, at laſt been haunted with a groundleſs ſpirit of jealouſy, and made one another miſerable? The hand that has often made the huſband's

breakfaſt, has at laſt mingled the deadly poiſon, and diſpatched the credulous man; while the arm that has often embraced his amiable conſort, has at length hurled the inſtrument of death, and reached the deadly blow.

But, allowing that the fear of God rules in their hearts, and peace dwells in their houſe, yet various events, which too often happen, write vanity on relations. We ought to feel for all our fellow-creatures, but the nearer the relation, the more ſenſibly we feel in their affliction. What muſt the huſband feel, when inexorable neceſſity compels him to ſend his dear wife, now deprived of the exerciſe of her reaſon, to a private mad-houſe, where her inſenſibility is often the only mitigation of the barbarous treatment of the cruel keepers! And what muſt the wife, who is all affection, feel when her much-eſteemed huſband is hand-cuffed, and carried off by a party like a criminal to Bedlam! How ſad, when the perſon much eſteemed for his good ſenſe, is now more remarkable for his incoherent nonſenſe!

5. But ſuppoſing ſome happy relations to live ignorant of all theſe gloomy diſaſters, how ſoon will death write vanity on their connections! Here huſband and wife, though firmly united in their affection, muſt, for a time, be ſeparated; he is called to ſerve his king and his country, or to do buſineſs in great waters; they part, alas! they part, and never meet again. The ſword of the enemy ſheds out his ſoul; or the devouring deep ſwallows him up; and a ſea of grief, with all its waves and billows, rolls over the bewailing widow. Thus it alſo fares with the fond parents, whoſe ſons go abroad, but never return to, or ſee their native land. Nay, ſuppoſe them not to ſeparate till death, death will do it to purpoſe. And, when we juſt begin to find happineſs in our families

lies and friends, and to give them too much of our affection, death ſnatches them away, and leaves us only the mournful remembrance. The new-married wife, the darling of her huſband, and pregnant with her firſt child, which was a joy to every connection, alas! when her hour comes, expires in her pangs, and, dying undelivered, is a grave to the fruit of her womb. Again, the huſband ſometimes in bringing home his bride, or ſoon after, is ſnatched from her arms, and leaves a mighty void.

The huſband and wife, the parent and child, and every relation, ſhould always expect a ſudden call to remove; ſo it often happens, and ſo it may always happen. At the table of a friend, or journeying on the road, death has arreſted ſome, and ſo admoniſhes all to be always ready. The deareſt and beſt of my friends is juſt ripening for death. As long as the world ſtands, there will be an endleſs rotation of loſſes, and mourning ſhall go round. The day is approaching when I ſhall not have one friend left me, or when I ſhall not be left to one friend I have. We muſt be ſeparated, and it matters not much which fall firſt, the interval is ſo ſhort. I cannot boaſt of a day to myſelf or my deareſt friend, for we are all on the wing for eternity. One that walks a long journey, when he firſt ſets out, may have many fellow-travellers, but, by the time he comes to his night's lodging, may walk alone; ſo may the parents of a large family loſe them all, and die without a friend to attend them.

This is indeed a true, but a mournful picture of human life, with reſpect to relations, and may teach us not to expect much happineſs in them below.

Again, though relations may benefit me in many reſpects, yet I ſhall find that in things of the greateſt moment

ment they can do nothing. If it were to gain me a kingdom, they cannot keep themſelves in health or life a moment. They may ſympathiſe with me, but they cannot bear either pain, ſickneſs, or ſorrow for me.—They cannot calm the tempeſt of my mind, or remove mental trouble. They may look on, and perhaps drop a tear, and pour out a prayer, but cannot heal a wounded ſpirit, or compoſe a troubled conſcience. All my connections can give me no courage for the day of judgement, or for enduring the pangs of death.

There is only one relation that can ſweeten all the gall and wormwood of uncomfortable relatives, of ſhort lived connections, and that is, being the friend, the ſon of God. By this, all the ſaints ſhall become my brethren; and be my brethren when the men of the world are no more; yea, angels of light ſhall be my relations in the world of ſpirits. No matter what ſorrow I have here, if I have not a ſinful hand in it; though I ſhould live in the world without a relation, and go out of it without one to lament my departure, I ſhall go to the beſt of friends, and to a general aſſembly of loving relations, where there ſhall not be the leaſt flaw in our affection, or langour in our brotherly love. Diſcord and death ſhall never be known there. Moreover, all my deareſt friends who belong to the heavenly family, I ſhall find there; and, though all natural ties ſhall be diſſolved, yet our love ſhall be ſtronger than ever. What can I ſuffer then? My ungrateful and graceleſs friends may vex me here, yea, vex me long and ſore, but it ſhall not be for ever. Nay, my gracious friends may vex me below, but, as we are all drawing nearer death, ſo we are drawing nearer the point of unity, for we ſhall be all one in glory, and ſhall diſcord no more. Death may deprive

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me of my moſt valuable friends, perhaps in a ſudden melancholy way, and at a time when I ſhall feel their loſs moſt. But the Friend I boaſt of is "the reſurrection and the life," and my friends ſhall riſe again, and I ſhall riſe again, and "there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow nor crying."

MEDITATION III.

THE VANITY OF CHILDREN.

Oct. 24. 1781.

Such is the perverſeneſs of our tempers, that we place the greateſt happineſs in things which we do not poſſeſs. Thus, childleſs parents ſee felicity flowing on all but themſelves; and are apt to ſay, What will Heaven give me, ſeeing I have no heir? Many times matters have turned ſo out, either with the ſtubbornneſs of children themſelves, or the calamities of the times, that the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave ſuck, have been bleſſed. A few conſiderations may make us more eaſy, whether we never have children, or loſe them by death.

I begin with one grand conſideration, that all the endearing connections between parents and children, huſband and wife, &c. ſubſiſt only for a few years. All the ties that are founded on fleſh and blood, are diſſolved in death. In the eternal world, parents need not provide for their children, nor need the children be ſubject to the fathers of their fleſh. The huſband cares not for

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ſuch things as may pleaſe his wife, nor the wife how to pleaſe her huſband. And, though a mutual joy may ariſe in the breaſts of religious relations, who have taken ſweet counſel together in their journey heavenward, yet the joy takes its riſe more from their ſpiritual relation than their carnal connection. The pious foundling, that could not count a friend on earth, ſhall find himſelf related to the whole general aſſembly, and church of the firſt-born.

2. Had we never ſo many and promiſing children, we muſt loſe them ſooner or later, either in their death, ſhould we out-live them, or in our own death, ſhould they ſurvive us. This being the caſe, it remains that they that have children be as though they had none; and they that weep for the want of them, as though they wept not.

In the world of ſpirits, there is no odds between the men that never had a child, or never had a living child, or that followed them all to the houſe of ſilence, and them that have had flouriſhing families, and never ſaw a corpſe carried out of their door. The relation is ſo finally diſſolved, that in their proſperity we have no joy, in their adverſity no pain. "Our ſons come to honour, and we know it not; again they are brought low, but we perceive it not of them."

All that we can promiſe to ourſelves from children is, to comfort and ſupport us in life, to attend on us at death, and to keep our names in remembrance when we are no more. But, ſometimes children are rather croſſes than comforts in life; and, in place of affording ſupport to their aged parents, need themſelves to be ſupported; and, in the day of trouble, at the hour of death, are in other countries, or ſettled far diſtant in their

their own country, or ſo involved in family-concerns, or in family or perſonal trouble, that they rather need to get than to give attendance. But, in the hour of diſtreſs, if Heaven is for us, he can raiſe up inſtruments among ſtrangers that will do the kind offices of ſincere friends, of affectionate children.

And, as to continuing our name among men, it is of very ſmall moment. Among the Jews, as the Meſſiah was to come of that people, it was accounted a reproach to be childleſs; but now-a-days children are oftener a reproach than a renown to their parents; for "the father of a fool hath no joy." Beſides, though I had ſons, grandſons, and their ſons to the end of time, yet what will it avail when we are all ſwallowed up of eternity? If the world is peopled, and the affairs of life carried on, no matter from what family. Let my name be written in the Lamb's book of life, and I ſhall not be greatly concerned whether ſons or daughters continue my name or not.

Thoſe who have neither ſons nor daughters, are free of that load of care and ſolicitude which parents have about their children, from the cradle to the grave. The ſleep of the one may be ſound, and their breaſt ſerene, while the ſleep of the other is often broken with the troubles of their little ones; and their breaſts tumultuate from fears of their death, and other dangers. But, let me caution parents that have loſt all their children, and thoſe perſons that never had any, not to do as the Egyptians did with their gods, not to adopt a part of the brute creation in the room of ſons and daughters, or make an idol of a horſe, a cow, a dog, or a cat. As the bed of the ocean can ſuſtain no loſs, for, pick up a pebble, or pull up a rock, in a moment the waters fill,

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and overflow all; ſo the ſoul that has God for his portion, his all, ſuſtains no loſs by the want of one comfort, or the loſs of another: God ever fills and overflows all.

Again, expecting to live in our poſterity, is but a fond conceit. There is not a neighbour I have can tell who was my great grandfather, nor can I myſelf go much farther back. Even the gentlemen that keep genealogical trees, and count up to the founder of their families, ſtill meet a blank at laſt, and are at a loſs to aſcertain of what ſtock they ſprang, by the irruption of the barbarous nations. In the rubbiſh of antiquity, the paſt ages are buried; only a very few names are preſerved in the annals of fame; and of theſe few there are ſome, who, as they were the ſcourge of mankind while alive, ſo now, when dead, are a ſcandal to the human race, that ever ſuch monſters ſprang from it. As to this world, often children are rather a ſhame than an honour to their progenitors; but, though they behave well, they cannot ſecure that we ſhall be remembered in the next generation; and, in a few generations more, we ſhall be forgotten of thoſe who ſprang of our loins.

Moreover, what will it advantage our mouldering duſt, or our immortal ſoul, that we have ſons, and ſons ſons, to the end of time? What if, at the day of judgement, ſome of theſe may ariſe, and curſe us to our face, for the bad example ſet before them, or our too great indulgence to their youthful follies? Hence ſee, that thoſe who have children have duties incumbent on them, which thoſe who have none are exeemed from.

Again, how eaſy may the childleſs pair be in the midſt of general diſaſter! The ſmall-pox rages around them, carries off numbers of dear little ones, but they have nothing

nothing to fear. War is kindled, and the youths go to the army and the fleet, but ſtill their mind is tranquil. A battle takes place by land, or an engagement by ſea, and all who have friends there tremble for the accounts, but they have no perturbation of thought. An accident happens to ſome child in the neighbourhood, every parent is in a panic, but, though they feel in the affliction of others, their ſoul is ſerene.

In a word, the pain that parents feel at the death of children is more than all the joy they ever had in them; the more ſo if come to years, and the courſe of their life has been a grief of heart to their pious parents.

Finally, if God is pleaſed to give me children, I receive them at his hand as bleſſings, not as my portion, and would wiſh to bring them up for him. If he take them away, I deſire to render up my loan without murmuring, but ſtill to hold by himſelf as my portion, my all. And, if he never gives me children, I believe that infinite wiſdom ſees ſuch a ſituation beſt for me; nor will I quarrel with his ſovereignty, who may do what he will with his own. In a word, ſubmiſſive and reſigned, whatever good he may with-hold from me, or take from me, and whatever evil he may inflict on me, I look beyond the comforts and the croſſes of a momentary life, to the eternal God, and the eternal ſtate, where my ſoul finds a felicity ſuiting her enlarged powers, not in the leaſt dependent on human relations, or mortal things.

MEDITATION IV.

THE VANITY OF HONOUR AND GREATNESS.

It is proper to obſerve here, that thoſe beautiful orders and degrees of men which Providence has been pleaſed to appoint for the better government of the world, are to be reverenced as the ordinance of Heaven, and all levelling principles abhorred. The deſign of theſe thoughts, therefore, is only that thoſe that ſit in high place may not be proud, nor thoſe that are in humble ſtation be peeviſh, but that in every ſituation we may make improvement for eternity, and chiefly prefer the honour that cometh only from God.

This univerſal deſire after glory and renown ſays, that we were not made to blaze like a flaſh of lightning for a moment, and then be extinguiſhed for ever; but that it ſhould be our ſtudy to ſhine brighteſt in that ſphere where we ſhall be for ever fixed.

To keep us humble in every ſtation of life, however exalted, in that very ſtation we have our equals. Is one man a gentleman? ſo are thouſands. Is another a a lord, a duke, a prince, a king, or an emperor? None of theſe are alone, there are other lords, dukes, princes, kings, and emperors. Is one man a miniſter of ſtate, a general of an army, or admiral of a fleet? In every kingdom there are miniſters of ſtate, and commanders in chief. What ſolid baſis has that honour which is founded in ſervitude? Yet ſuch is the condition of the higheſt officers of ſtate, who ſometimes, when they have done

done their beſt, are diſgraced, and loaded with reproach. If theſe offices are filled from a ſenſe of duty, and not from ambition of mind, it is praiſe-worthy. But we may ſee the vanity of honour in a few things, and thence learn to ſeek ſomething better.

1. Honour deſcends to ſome from their anceſtors, who, like Pharaoh's courtiers of old, boaſt, "I am the ſon of ancient kings." But what can the honour of my progenitors do to me, unleſs I behave myſelf well; if otherwiſe, they ſhame me, and I am a diſgrace to them. It cannot make me eſteemed if I aſſociate with vagabonds, that my forefathers aſſociated with nobles. It could not cure a deformed or diſeaſed body, nor heal a diſordered mind, though royal blood flowed in my veins. Let ſuch as may boaſt how much noble blood meets in them, remember that the blood of old Adam runs in them, and poiſons all, kindling corruption, blowing up pride, inflaming the paſſions, breaking out into ſin, and finally bringing on death.

2. Honour accrues to ſome from their titles and eſtates, but of this no man has reaſon to be proud. It reminds him what his anceſtors have done or been, and what he ought to be; and, if he acts below character, his honorary titles are epithets of ridicule. But, if he loſes his eſtate, his ſhame is redoubled, for, to be a begging nobleman, is more diſgraceful than to be a common beggar.

3. Some riſe to honour and glory, according to their ſucceſs on the field of war; but, however noble to defend our country, it is a poor honour that is tinged with the blood of ten thouſands of our fellow-creatures ſlain.

4. The honour of ſome is to fill the great offices of ſtate, repreſent the ſovereign abroad, and be admitted into the royal preſence at home. But of this none need

be proud; the ſlipperineſs of their ſituation, the ambition, the malice, and the oppoſition of others, will never allow them to ſit eaſy or ſecure in their ſeats.—Yea, how often have prime miniſters been impeached of high-treaſon, I had almoſt ſaid how few eſcape being impeached? And ſeveral have loſt their eſtates, their honours, and their heads. A ſervant in low life may be turned away, and not a word about it; but, if any ſervant of a king falls under the royal diſpleaſure, and is diſgraced, all Europe is informed, and his own country rings with the event; and ſometimes he cannot bear the affront, but retires to live abroad, and thus foregoes a pleaſure which the meaneſt peaſant enjoys, that of living in his native land.

Let us next ſee in what honour and greatneſs are conſpicuous. It muſt be in ſomething which we cannot ſtrictly call our own. No man has any marks of honour either in body or mind; a king may be a dwarf or crook-back'd, or of ſuch weak intellects, that he is either a dupe to his miniſters, or of ſuch a deſpotic and tyrannical turn of mind, that he is quite unequal to the weight of government. A lord may be lame, or deaf, or blind, or a fool, a fop, or an idiot. But, in a word, the magnificence of great men is ſhown,

1. In their houſes. They dwell in palaces, ſo noble and elegant that the very ſight of them is a ſhew and entertainment to many. Yet, how inſignificant ſuch ſuperb lodgings, that cannot bolt out diſeaſe, nor debar diſquiet of mind; nay, cannot ſecure family-peace, nor afford that felicity that might be expected! Sometimes a nobleman may be ill lodged a few miles from his own houſe, which he cannot carry along with him, while a ſnail lodges in its own houſe wherever it goes. A ſpark of

of fire, or a flash of lightning, may consume our noblest mansions to the ground; a blast of wind, or a shock of an earthquake, may beat them down, and bury us in their ruins.

2. Grandeur also appears in a sumptuous table; but this is very vanity, and no happiness is to be expected in it. Though people may and ought to live according to their station, yet, to be an epicure, is a disgrace in any station. If nature is supported, the end of eating and drinking is attained. Much precious time is wasted at too many tables, and sometimes health is impaired by the finest dainties. We need never be proud of feeding a carcase that is at last to feed the worms. It is the most abominable idolatry to make our belly our god, and find supreme delight in royal dainties.

3. State and grandeur also appears in the richness and elegance of dress. But, silk and scarlet, rich trimmings, and fine embroidery, gold and precious stones, may cover a loathsome carcase, but cannot discover a noble soul. The plumage of some birds, yea, the wings of some insects, will outshine the finest dress.

4. Magnificence and state is shown in numerous attendants, rich liveries, horses and chariots. But how vain must these things be that at sometimes can be of no use to us! In the hour of sleep, in the time of sickness, in the day of death, horses and chariots, and all our attendants, will avail us nothing. Let us now glance the vanity of all this.

To put on daily the most gorgeous apparel, to dwell in the most elegant house, sit at the most sumptuous board, and go abroad, attended with the most noble retinue, by being familiar, soon loses all relish. A peasant could hardly sleep in a palace for viewing and wondering

dering at its grandeur, where, perhaps, the prince can hardly ſleep for perplexity of mind. Though we are to give honour to whom honour is due, which is the command of Heaven, yet that nobleman muſt have but a mean ſoul, who finds an uncommon ſatisfaction in being daily called My Lord, or addreſſed at every ſentence, Your Grace. If a man in high ſtation in the world promotes the cauſe of virtue, protects the innocent, delivers the oppreſſed, and relieves the poor, then he acts for God in the world, and deſerves the higheſt honour. But, if he only ſhines ſuperior to others in pomp and grandeur, he is as much to be pitied as a man that, from his great ſtature, is exhibited as a ſhow around the country. If two noblemen are going to court, which acts moſt in character; the one who goes in all the parade he can appear in, and ſo draws admiration from the vulgar, is gazed at, and, if popular, drawn or huzza'd by the rabble; or the other, who mixes *incognito* among the croud, and, with quiet and tranquillity, arrives at court, ſmiling at his friend's being a dupe to his own vanity, in obtaining the applauſes of a giddy populace? Juſt ſo, all who are travelling for the court of glory, for the heaven of God, need not hunt for honour in their journey, becauſe their utmoſt wiſh ſhall be beſtowed on them at their journey's end. Saints, like great men on their travels, or princes on a tour, who lay aſide their ſtate, and drop their high titles, and go under meaner names, to avoid ceremony and every obſtruction in their travels, ſhould purſue their journey to the heavenly Cannan as much retired from the buſtle of the world as poſſible, and avoiding every thing that may obſtruct their progreſs thither. It is ſaid the chameleon lives on air, but he muſt be a very vain man that can feaſt his mind with honour.

honour. Thus ſhall he never be ſatisfied. Will it add to the felicity of my mind, that a man takes off his hat to me, or can it diminiſh from it that I ſtand uncovered to others? True happineſs lies in being reconciled to that ſtation of life in which an all-wiſe Providence has been pleaſed to place us. As in a houſe, the ſtones that lie neareſt the ground are as neceſſary to the building as the cope-ſtone, though not ſo conſpicuous; ſo, in the political fabric, the meaneſt offices are as neceſſary to its ſtanding, as the moſt exalted: There is even a connection between the King and the collier, for, without the induſtry of the one, the palace of the other would be uncomfortable in a cold winter night. Like ſpokes in a wheel, whether uppermoſt or undermoſt, all ſupport the machine in its motion; and in the ſtate, as well as in a wheel, ſome are always falling into diſgrace, and others aſcending to rank and eminence. Great men may be thought to be ſoon affronted, but a great ſoul ſhould be ſuperior to every affront. If a man pays not that reſpect to me which he ought, he forgets himſelf, it makes no odds on me. Honour not given where due, like a debt not paid where juſt, can never deſpoil us of our right. If a man ſhould abuſe me never ſo much, affront me never ſo often, it cannot make me ceaſe to be what I really am; and if he ſhould load me with empty honours, ſwell me with vain applauſe, it cannot make me become what I am not.

It is ſurpriſing, how ſome men of ſenſe ſhould idolize a thing of nought! Will it make the houſe more or leſs commodious, that I am the firſt or laſt that takes the door? Will my meals be leſs nouriſhing, that I ſit at the foot of the table, or at a ſide-board, or down below ſtairs?——

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MEDITATION V.

THE VANITY OF LONG LIFE.

April 13. 1779.

"A living dog is better than a dead lion," says Solomon, but the departed saint is happier than the living. Why, then, is life thus the idol of all? This mistake arises from flattering expectations of future good, from a strong attachment to the things of sense, a carnality in our affections, and an ignorance of the heavenly state.

The minister of Jesus, and the godly magistrate, who have reformation at heart, may, like Hezekiah of old, wish for a lengthening of their days; yet He who raises up one valuable instrument in church or state, can raise up others, though these were removed, seeing "the residue of the Spirit is with him."

Life is a journey, and every traveller, when his journey is ended, arrives at home. Now, if I arrive at my heavenly home at last, will it not be well? but the sooner I arrive there, is it not the better? However long I live, there may be still something for which I would wish to live a little longer, and at this rate I shall never arrive at the period when I can say, Now I am willing to die. But I bless his sovereignty, that as he sent me into the world at his time, so will he take me out of it when he thinks fit. Old age may make me ripe for the grave, but not ready for death; for grace only can crucify the world to me, and me unto the world. He that lives till he knows God, and has made sure his interest in Christ, has fulfilled his days,

days, and needs not refuſe to die. It is beneath the dignity of an immortal ſoul to wiſh to live to eat and drink, and enjoy the pleaſures of ſenſe for a ſeaſon, eſpecially if he has any hopes on his departure to mingle in the tranſports of the higher houſe.

The longer we live, the more our cares, our infirmities, and our galling ſights increaſe. If a man has, after his own family is ſettled in the world, not only the care of one, but of five families, ſons and daughters, where every affliction and diſaſter makes inroads on his reſt; while one family loſes their father, and another their mother, and the grand-children look up to the aged ſire, who perhaps can be of little ſervice to them, but to mingle and augment the lamentation, are not his cares increaſed?

The experience of all old men confirms the truth, that infirmities multiply with years. One is confined to his room, another to his chair, and a third to his bed. But, allow that we ſhould ſubmit to be blind, deaf, feeble, and peeviſh, this may be borne; but how afflicting to have our ſoul ſo fettered with a frail body, that we can be of little or no uſe in our generation, and cannot with our wonted vigour enter into the duties of religion. Indeed, the ſaint ſhall not fade in old age, there being ſtill a living union that ſhall preſerve him green; but ſuch a clog is the body to the ſoul in the laſt ſtage of life, that perhaps the man ſlumbers two thirds of his time, and is in a manner greatly abſent from himſelf through the decline of life. Theſe conſiderations ſhould make us improve life while in its vigour, nor be anxious to live to that time when we are half-dead when alive.

Again, the longer we live, the more galling ſights we ſee. Ah! would we not wiſh even to ſhut our eyes in

in death from the ſcenes of wickedneſs and deceit which every where abound? deceit not only among ſinners, but among ſaints.

Suppoſe that my kind-hearted and generous prince ſhould beſtow on me an elegant houſe, and extenſive inheritance, and command me to ſet out to take poſſeſſion, and that in conſequence I commence my journey, and travel in a way I never walked before; would I then be peeviſh if I arrive ſooner at my manſion than I expected, or would I be diſappointed that my journey were not as long as that of ſome others who ſhared of the royal bounty; eſpecially if my whole journey lay through a barren deſart, an howling wilderneſs, where fiery ſerpents ſting, and wild beaſts devour? And is not this the picture of life? Is not the old ſerpent hiſſing round me every day, with a view to ſting me to death? And are not my own corruptions dangerous to me as the beaſts of prey? What madneſs, then, as I travel through the wilderneſs, ſtill to wiſh it wider and wider, ſtill to wiſh myſelf at the ſame diſtance from my Father's houſe, and from the inheritance in light! One would think that what I at preſent poſſeſs muſt be a ſubſtantial bliſs, that can make me poſtpone the enjoyment of what is every way raviſhing and divine. But what do I poſſeſs? I enjoy the good things of time; I ſee ſun, moon, and ſtars; I eat, I drink, I ſleep; I converſe with the men of the world, I viſit a ſelect friend, I attend to the affairs of life; I provide for the preſent, and lay plans for the future; and what is this but mere trifling, in compariſon of the employment of heaven?

What made men excuſe themſelves from coming to the ſupper of the king, in the goſpel, makes men ſtill excuſe themſelves from death. One has bought an eſtate,

eſtate, and wiſhes to live to improve it; another has married a wife, and for her ſake would fain lengthen his days; another has purchaſed cattle for huſbandry, and deſires to ſee how they anſwer expectation; and another has ſet up ſome new branch of trade, ſome manufactory, and wiſhes to ſee how it ſucceeds, before his eyes are ſhut. But the ſoul is in a melancholy ſituation that can prefer theſe to communion with God and the Lamb. An affectionate parent may wiſh to live a while to rear a young and tender family; but though they loſe an earthly father, if they find an heavenly, the one excels the other as far as the heaven is higher than the earth, not only with reſpect to kindneſs to cheriſh, but with reſpect to wiſdom to direct, and power to protect, and riches to ſupply. And if this beſt of fathers will bleſs, he can do it without the inſtrumentality of earthly parents; he can make miſers to deal bountifully with them, and ſtrangers to become friends.

If a ſhip, crowded with paſſengers, ſpring a leak, ſuch a leak that ſhe muſt in a little go to the bottom; and if ſome now and then are falling over the ſide, and periſh, would it be proper in any to be diſtracted with fear of this early fate, or for ſurvivors greatly to condole them, ſeeing in a little it was to be the fate of them all? Juſt ſo, this world that contains the whole human race, is approaching to the day of judgement, when time ſhall be finiſhed, and eternity begin; ſo that, though I could live through every age till the laſt moment of time, yet I muſt die, I muſt quit with time, and enter on eternity.

The peeviſhneſs that naturally attends our old age, renders us not only a burden to our friends, but to ourſelves. We are apt to take things up in the worſt light,

to

to fret and repine; to recall the days of chearful youth, and to compare them with the ſad decline of life; and to be ſullen at the thought that we are neglected of our neighbours, forgotten of our friends, and that our death will be a gentle diſpenſation to our neareſt relations. We grow ſtrangers in that very place where we have dwelt all our life, while thoſe that were brought up with us, are cut off by death, and the riſing generation knows us not. The more we advance into old age, the more we become children the ſecond time; but the ſooner we die, if we die in Chriſt, the ſooner we are like the angels of God.

But, let it be remembered, that long life is a gift from God; and is a bleſſing beſtowed on his ſaints, and promiſed to his people: "With long life will I ſatisfy him;" and ſays God to Abraham, "Thou ſhalt be buried in a good old age;" and it is atteſted of David, "That he died in a good old age, full of days." If Heaven is pleaſed to beſtow long life on me, I ſhould improve it wholly for his glory. Sometimes we wonder why ſuch and ſuch old perſons are preſerved alive, who ſeem in all reſpects grown uſeleſs in their generation. But, *firſt*, the ſovereignty of Heaven muſt be reverenced, who renders no account of his matters to the ſons of men; and, *ſecondly*, They may be uſeful by their prayers for their native land, and the church of Chriſt.—

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ME-

MEDITATION VI.

NO SHADOW IN HEAVEN.

April 9. 1757.

By ſimilitudes here I only glance at the glories to be hereafter. Under the ſhadow of the Tree of Life do I find my ſupreme, my only ſweet repoſe; but there the ſhadow will not pleaſe. I ſhall dwell among the branches, yea, be a branch in the true Vine, not by faith as now, but by the ineffable ties of viſion, fruition, union, communion, and love. Then ſhall my Beloved be mine, and his deſire be towards me, and my deſire eternally towards him. Language ſhall not fail me to expreſs my love there, which thought is too lame for here. O how beautifully will the well-beloved ſhine, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand look, when the glaſs is broken; he that is fairer than the ſons of men, fairer than the ſons of God, in whom the glory of the Father ſhines, in whom the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells! O that full look of love, that viſion face to face, that walk with him in white in the paradiſe of God! I ſhall know the ſacred ſweets of love better than ever language could reveal below. All is happineſs in its higheſt degree, glory in its meridian, perfection in its zenith, life in its eternal bloom, love in its pureſt flame, fruition large as deſire, and viſion full and free as wiſh. O how comely ſhall my Saviour look, when I ſhall ſee him, not darkly as now, in the twilight of faith, but in the full blaze of glory, in the noon-day of eternity. The heavenly Jeruſalem ſhall not be leſſened in its glory by compariſons as now; brilliant gold ſhall not darken its beauty, nor the burning ſun conceal its ſplendour; the gates of God

outſhine the precious pearls, and the glittering gems; the walls of bliſs are above compariſon, above conception too; the pavement of glory is infinitely more beautiful than cauſeways of tranſparent cryſtal, or ſtreets of pureſt gold; and the highway where the King Eternal walks in majeſty among his enraptured adorers, far more outſhines and excels marble pavements ſtudded with gems, than theſe can the ſtreets of time! The crowns of kings are but as duſt for the feet of the ſaints in bliſs. Be not, then, O child of God! much dejected at the want of gold now, which thou ſhalt ſo undervalue hereafter; it is enough that thou arrive at laſt, however mean and poor, at theſe tranſparent walks above.

What ſhall the light of that land be which the Lord God and the Lamb do illuminate! What ſhall the majeſty of that throne be that is higher than the heavens! What ſhall the happineſs of the ranſomed nations be, who ſhall walk in the light of his countenance for ever! What ſhall the triumphant ſtate of that city be, whoſe length in the eternal duration of its felicity, whoſe breadth in the infinity of its beatitudes and never-fading glories, and whoſe height in ſacred attainments and aſſimilating manifeſtations, are equal to the joy of all the bleſſed inhabitants! Sun, moon, and metaphors are no more; but Jehovah and the Lamb are the fulfilment of every promiſe, the ſubject of every ſong, the happineſs of every ſoul, the light of every eye, and the joy of every heart.

ME-

MEDITATION VII.

THE ENJOYMENT OF GOD.

THE enjoymeut of thyſelf, O God! is the greateſt happineſs, the higheſt attainment of angels, and is the utmoſt that my ſoul can wiſh or deſire. When ſhall I walk in the midſt of the flames of love with him whoſe form is like the Son of God? Haſten the appointed period of my departure, and let me come and appear before God. Finiſhed time ſhall begin my felicity, and bring me to my Father's houſe, where I ſhall ſwim in the rivers of pleaſures, bathe in the water of life, and drink the immortaliſing ſtream that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. There I ſhall put on, never to put off again, his likeneſs, rejoice in his preſence, reſt and be refreſhed in his love, and dwell in his houſe for ever. There thy perfections ſhall repleniſh all my powers of ſoul, thy plenitude every faculty, thy goodneſs ſhall be poured out beyond the ſtretch of my deſires, ſo that I ſhall be full of God, brimful of love, and beautiful with glory. There I ſhall kindle in mine ardours with angels, melt in love with cherubs, and live in never-dying flames with ſeraphs. There I will raiſe my notes with the bards of paradiſe, and emulate in praiſe with the choirs on high. My eternal abode ſhall be beneath the arbours of bliſs, and my growth among the tall cedars of God. Under the glances of his eye ſhall I ripen in glory; to know him more and more ſhall be my eternal ſtudy, to poſſeſs him my happineſs, and ever to be with him my everlaſting felicity. There

I ſhall be allowed amazing nearneſs to his throne, aſtoniſhing aſſimilation to, and ineffable communion with him for ever. I ſhall no more put up prayer, where all is poſſeſſion, plenitude, perfection, and peace, where eternity is one tranſport, one uninterrupted rapture of joy. There, in the rays of the morning-ſtar, and beams of the meridian ſun, ſhall I put on unfading glories, and baſk for evermore. There the Lamb ſhall be my light, and in his love ſhall I exult; love ſhall no more be languid, but ardent and extreme; and I ſhall no more lament an abſent God and a hiding Saviour, a freezing prayer, a weak faith, a tempting devil, or a raging luſt. In a word, poſſeſſing the infinite God, who is an infinite good, my ſoul, dilated in all her powers, ſhall be raviſhed, entranced, delighted with my adorable portion through an endleſs evermore.

MEDITATION VIII.

THE HEAVENLY VISION.

Now I am at the height of my deſires, at the zenith of my expectations; and, while I have not one requeſt to make, the anſwers of all my prayers enrich me for ever. Here I behold him without the glaſs, within the vail, him for whom I longed, him in whom ten thouſand beauties meet, ten thouſand glories ſhine; him who is the chiefeſt among ten thouſand, the glory of the higher houſe, the flower of bliſs, the excellency of eternity, "the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon!" Now, let reverence bend, and wonder

wonder riſe, and love be ſeven times heated to its glorious object; now take a full view of the Plant of Renown; fix thine eyes for ever on him, for he is thine own, thine own for evermore. Love, and be enlarged; be enlarged, and love. How am I eſcaped the ſhadows of time, and plunge into eternal day! O the light of glory! O the glory of the light of the higher houſe! How faint and imperfect was the deſcription of the heavenly country, of the land of bliſs! If the walls of the city ſurpaſſed in glory, the ſtreets in beauty, every metaphor, what muſt be the privileges, what the immunities, what the beatitudes of the happy inhabitants! And is this the place of mine eternal reſidence, the city of my fixed abode? No more ſeparation from "the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born," no more abſent from the communion of ſaints! O ſaints and angels, ſeraphim and cherubim, my companions in bliſs for ever, now I mingle in your raptures, and join in your ſongs of praiſe to him that loved you, to him that loved me!

But, deareſt Lord, may I approach thy throne, and begin communion for eternity! The ſceptre ſtretched out encourages me to draw near. Now all is mine, and love flames higher ſtill. O the ſweetneſs of fellowſhip with Jehovah and the Lamb! Now I am in the heaven of heavens, and dwell before the throne. O how ſweet the kiſſes of his mouth, whoſe love is better than wine! Let him "ſtay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples; for I am ſick of love," and joy in the diſeaſe; for I am ſick of love, love never known before, or underſtood below. O the height and the depth, the breadth and the length of love! Here one beam of glory is ſeven-fold brighter than the day of grace; and here one

ſpark of love is purer than all the flames that ever burnt below.

My whole ſoul dilates, expands, and graſps at God; but ſtill he is infinitely beyond and above all that I can conceive or think, yet in his infinite perfections I find my boundleſs felicity. What eternal ages ſhall I paſs in bliſs, poſſeſſing the cloudleſs noon of glory, and gazing with growing wonder, and heightening delight, on the glories of God and the Lamb for evermore!

MEDITATION IX.

FOR EVER WITH THE LORD.

Oct. 17. 1784.

"In thy preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right-hand are pleaſures evermore." O how happy, then, to be in thy preſence eternally, and at thy right-hand for evermore! Then, farewell, ſun, moon, and ſtars; I have no need of you. Farewell, days, years, and ages; it is all eternity now. Farewell, good and bad ſeaſons; I live on angels food. Farewell, my pious friends and Chriſtian acquaintance; we ſhall ſhortly meet to part no more. Farewell, my tender offspring; I caſt you on your father's God, and know you ſhall ſuſtain no loſs. But, my Chriſtleſs friends, my graceleſs acquaintance, what farewell muſt I take of you? A final, an everlaſting farewell; for I ſhall never, never ſee you more, unleſs at the laſt day mine eye hit you gnaſhing your teeth among the miſerable wretches at the Judge's left-hand.

hand. Farewell, frailty and diſtracted devotions; I put on the vigour of immortality. Farewell, the worſhip of the church militant; I join the ſong of angels, and the hallelujahs of the higher houſe. Farewell, cares and concern, loſſes and croſſes, mourning and tears, diſappointment and pain; the heavenly plenitude makes up all. I only retain one concern, the proſperity of Zion, the ſalvation of ſouls, and the Redeemer's glory. Farewell, ye ſcriptures of truth:—Ah! no, I carry your divine myſteries, glorious truths, and golden promiſes, treaſured up in my heart into his immediate preſence, whoſe name is the Word of God.

But now I am ever with the Lord; and this ſums up the felicity of all the heavenly nations, of all the hoſts of light. While I eternally approach his throne, and view, with growing tranſport, the glories of Immanuel's face, earth, and all its vanities, time, and all its troubles, are forgot for ever, like an atom loſt in the immenſity of ſpace. Now I have no more to do with created things, and never ſhall have more concern with them; but I am for ever with God and the Lamb. I enjoy the Supreme Good in the higheſt degree, through an endleſs evermore.

MEDITATIONS

ON THE

LOVE OF CHRIST

IN

ASSUMING THE HUMAN NATURE,

AND

SUFFERING IN IT

FOR

THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

MEDITATIONS

ON THE

LOVE OF CHRIST.

My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.
Let the love of Chriſt dwell in you richly, ſpeaking in yourſelves.

MEDITATION I.

ON THE GENERATION OF CHRIST.

Feb. 19. 1759.

MATTHEW begins his goſpel with the moſt aſtoniſhing account of pedigree that ever was attempted, "The book of the generation of Jeſus Chriſt."—The generation of him who is without beginning of days or end of life! the parentage of the eternal Son of the eternal Father! God born of a woman! the Eternal, an infant of days! Not that his Godhead could, or did undergo any change, that being unchangeable; but how ſtrange to think, that the little embryo forming in the virgin's womb,

womb, ſhould be in perſonal union with the divine nature! that the Lord of heaven and earth ſhould count his pedigree among the men of the earth, and he have ſo many fathers from a ſuppoſed Joſeph to Adam, who was the only-begotten Son of God!

We had caſt ourſelves out of the family of heaven, and he comes into the family of earth, that we may be re-admitted into the family of God. O wonderful! that the Ancient of Days ſhould ſo ſtoop for yeſter-day beings, as to be accounted one of them, that they might be called the children of the living God, in the place where they were not the ſons of God! How ſhall I ſing of this condeſcenſion that is my elevation, this generation of Jeſus Chriſt, this pedigree among dying men, that my birth might be from above, and my name written in the Lamb's book of life!

No wonder that the winged meſſengers of heaven were buſy on the grand event, and that, at the birth of the Prince of Peace, the heavenly multitude ſhould burſt out in rapturous ſong. Well did it become the ſparkling firmament to ſhine with a new and uncommon ſtar, when the world was bleſſed with an uncommon birth, when the bright and morning Star of glory was condeſcending to ſhine among the clouds of a benighted earth, to diſſipate the darkneſs of ſin, and bring in the light of everlaſting day! Fear not, Zion; behold thy King, thy God, thy Saviour, cometh in a more meek and lowly manner than that in which he took up his ſervant Elijah. Though his chariots are twenty thouſand, he comes not in a fiery chariot drawn by flaming ſeraphs, but wrapt up in thy kindred clay, that all his ſaints may worſhip him who was their brother, and not be deſpiſed

for

for kiſſing, for adoring, Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature.

This is indeed the beginning of wonders; and may it begin a wondering in my ſoul that ſhall never ceaſe, but terminate in that eternal ſong before the throne, "To him that LOVED us, and WASHED us from our ſins in his OWN BLOOD, and hath made us KINGS and PRIESTS to God and his Father; to him be dominion and glory for ever. Amen.

MEDITATION II.

OUR SAVIOUR BORN IN A STABLE, AND LAID IN A MANGER.

Under Sail, Feb. 20. 1759.

O SURPRISING tale! amazing ſtory! that the Heir of all things ſhould be born in a ſtable, and laid in a manger! Warm rooms and ſoft beds within, but not a foot-breadth, not a ſeat for Mary in the inn! Ah! where was human ſympathy to a woman big with child, though it had not been the Saviour of the world? But could ſhe fare the worſe, that ſhe was pregnant of that holy thing that ſhould be called the Son of God?

Methinks I ſee her and her huſband at the door: "Pray, can we be lodged here to-night?" "No; all the rooms are already taken up."—"But is there not an upper or by-room; for though it be not good, we will put up with it for a night, as I am fatigued with my journey, and not able to go from door to door to ſeek lodgings." "We can ſpare you none; but ſince you

are weary, there is a ſtable, take the ſhelter of its roof till to-morrow." And there, in ſilent night, without attendance, ſhe brings forth her firſt-born, wraps him up in ſwaddling cloaths, and lays him in a manger; but where, or how ſhe is laid up, as women in that condition uſe to be, to gather ſtrength and ſuckle her infant, we hear not.

The dead and thoughtleſs world is aſleep, when mercy is pouring down enriching bleſſings; but Heaven is awake, and the great mandate is given in the court of glory, "When he bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the world, let all the angels of God worſhip him." The meſſengers of the Higheſt are anxious to carry the good news to gladden the happy world. Anon, a mighty angel, by commiſſion, ſpreads his willing wings, feathered with celeſtial light, to tell the favoured ſhepherds "the glad tidings of great joy to all people, that there is a Saviour born, which is Chriſt the Lord."

No ſooner is the ſeraph flown away, than methinks I ſee a company of the heavenly hoſt, eager to have a ſhare in telling the heavenly tidings, bow before the throne: "We pray thee, let us fly alſo." "Wherefore will ye go, my angels, ſeeing there are no tidings for you to carry?"—"But we pray thee, O Eternal! let us in any wiſe fly alſo." The aſſent is given, the flight is taken; "and ſuddenly there was with the angel a great multitude of the heavenly hoſt," who, if they come too late to tell the tidings, yet are come in time to ſing "Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, good-will towards men!"

What ſurpriſing love was this in the Son of God, that though he was heir of all things, yet for my ſake he ſhould be as one poſſeſſed of nothing! It is a queſtion

if

if one of all the tribe of Judah came into the world as he did; had no better a cradle than a manger, no better a bed-chamber than a ſtable. What ſtate, then, is too mean, what condition too abject, for a diſciple of Jeſus? He who is the rightful Inheritor, the original Poſſeſſor of all things, came into this world with nothing, that we who had nothing might go into the other world, through him, poſſeſſed of all things. This is a change indeed in my favour that ſhould change and turn my affections from earth to heaven, from tranſient ſhadows to eternal ſubſtances, from worldly grandeur (which He, who has all wiſdom, made no account of, as I ſee in his birth and life) to ſpiritual glory, and from every thing to God.

MEDITATION III.

HEROD AND JERUSALEM TROUBLED AT THE NEWS OF CHRIST'S BIRTH.

Feb. 21. 1759.

Why were Herod and Jeruſalem troubled at tidings which might have made them leap for joy? What made Herod tremble? The Son of God came not to govern the world, but to ſave the world; not to poſſeſs himſelf of a temporal monarchy, but to beſtow an eternal kingdom; not to take away men's juſt rights, but to diſpoſſeſs Satan of his unjuſt uſurpation; not to raiſe wars with the Roman State, but to make a firm and eternal peace for men with the court of heaven. So do blinded men miſtake their greateſt mercy, and are troubled at the divineſt bleſſings.

And to this very day the ſame prejudices prevail. Men think, if they embrace religion, that they muſt quit with all pleaſure, give up with all joys, be divorced from all ſociety, be expoſed to all troubles, take up with all croſſes, and become the moſt miſerable creatures of all. But what condeſcenſion was this in the high and lofty One, whoſe preſence enlightened the heaven of heavens, to come to that world, which, inſtead of making him welcome, was troubled at his coming! "He came unto his own, but his own received him not;" yet ſo ſtrong was his love, ſo almighty his pity and compaſſion, that he will come with life and every bleſſing, though he ſhould be an unwelcome gueſt, and even be perſecute with a malice almoſt proportionate to that divine good-will he bore to men! O the beauties of redeeming love! how do other glories die in the meridian beam! and all turn trifling themes when Jeſus in his none-ſuch love appears!

MEDITATION IV.

THE BABES OF BETHLEHEM SLAIN.

Feb. 22.

Ah! muſt the little infants ſuffer, becauſe the Son of God aſſumed the human nature? It had been better for the young innocents that he had come like an arch-angel, and not like one of them; but what advantage would it have brought to Abraham's ſeed, had he refuſed to aſſume the nature of man, and taken on him the nature of angels? Why ſhould man be more ungrateful becauſe

cauſe his condeſcendency is greater? paſſing by the angelic, and chuſing to redeem the human race! Here I may ſee the wrath he came to take away, how heavy, how terrible it was! He could not even enter the world with the accommodations of others. No ſooner is he born, and appears in my woful ſtead, but juſtice juſtly, though Herod unjuſtly, purſues; and though he perſonally eſcapes, he is ſlain in many a coſtly effigy, which cauſed Rachel many days of weeping.

Theſe little ones were, if not the firſt martyrs for the cauſe of Chriſt, yet the firſt ſufferers on the account of Chriſt. But O how vain are the counſels of men! many are ſlain leſt one eſcape; yet the only one ſought for eſcapes, while many are ſlain! What muſt be the pangs and ſorrows of the parents of theſe (may I call them) infant martyrs? But how much more piercing muſt their thoughts be, who were waiting for ſalvation in Iſrael, and long expecting the promiſed Meſſiah, unleſs we ſuppoſe, that they were conſcious that Joſeph, and the child Jeſus, and his mother, were fled into Egypt? a fact which, it is likely, was not known publicly; for Herod, had he known that he who was born King of the Jews was eſcaped into Egypt, needed not have ſlain the babes of Bethlehem. What, I ſay, muſt have been their thoughts, to ſee ſo many butchered with this view; and perhaps their ignorance and miſbelief prevailing ſo far, as to excite fear leſt he might fall among the number? He was obliged to fly before he could fly; and, by parental ſympathy, was conveyed away from the cruel ſword of the keen perſecutor, whoſe temporal ſceptre ſhould have protected him as a ſubject, and who ought himſelf to have ſubmitted to his ſpiritual ſceptre as a Saviour.

Thus was the Son of God treated in the world which he had made, and among the people he had choſen for his own! Yet theſe amazing and mighty difficulties were but like ſo many off-ſets and foils to Almighty love that overcame them all. O that world of love that dwelt and was diſplayed in the Saviour of the world! He who lay in the Father's boſom from eternity, not only came from heaven to earth, (not that his Godhead, filling all in all can change his dwelling), but was baniſhed from one part of earth to another, that the baniſhed ſons of Adam might be brought home again, not only to dwell in the New Jeruſalem, but to ſee the King in mercy, reconciliation, and peace!

MEDITATION V.

ON CHRIST APPEARING AS A MAN AMONG US.

Gibraltar Bay, Feb. 24. 1759.

"Oh that thou wert as my brother, that ſucked the breaſts of my mother," was the church's requeſt of old. She longed to ſee the promiſed Meſſiah in her own nature, and worſhip the incarnate God; and, with the warmeſt glow of ſacred affection, preſented her requeſt.

Now the petition is fulfilled to us: "The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Let Arians kick againſt the pricks, and ſwallow burning coals, yet "God manifeſted in the fleſh" ſhall be the baſis of my hope, the ground-work

ork of my conſolation. He has taken my nature on him, to ſatisfy for ſin in that nature that had ſinned; to exalt that nature to heaven that had debaſed itſelf to hell; he took part of fleſh and blood, that we might be made partakers of his divine nature. He is a merciful, a faithful, a feeling high-prieſt, who not only was a ſacrifice, but in our nature was ſubject to our ſinleſs infirmities, and was tempted, that he might ſympathiſe with us in our infirmities, and ſuccour us when we are tempted.

Angels are aſtoniſhed at the condeſcenſion of their Lord, and look with ſatisfaction and wonder into the myſtery of redemption. Should I think little of this whereby God has manifeſted more of himſelf, let philoſophers talk as they pleaſe, than in all the works of creation? This union of the human nature to his divine is indiſſoluble; ſtill he ſhall be "Immanuel, God with us," God-man in our nature. This in the higheſt heavens ſhall ſhed an inconceivable glory and luſtre on the ſaints, who ſhall be like him when they ſee him as he is. Hence, with one breath I can, to my unſpeakable joy, expreſs myſteries and wonders, and ſay to Immanuel, "My fleſh, my bone, my brother, my Lord, and my God!"

MEDITATION VI.

CHRIST'S OBSCURITY FOR THIRTY YEARS.

Gibraltar Bay, Feb. 26. 1759.

Man would needs be higher than he was made, and had a ſinful deſire of knowing more than was revealed, but plunged himſelf into ignorance and night. Well, this is the condition of fallen Adam and his family; but behold, O my ſoul! how the divine Redeemer, to raiſe men again to the knowledge of the Moſt High, comes not only in an obſcure manner, but lives a mean and obſcure life. Could the world believe, that the God that made the world, dwelt in it thirty years unknown to the world, a few excepted? At the age of twelve, indeed, the beams of the eternal Sun brake through the clouds of fleſh, and ſhone with an aſtoniſhing majeſty and luſtre; yet even then he became ſubject to his parents. O how the Poſſeſſor of all things turned the choice of the world upſide down! Should I then graſp at it, or its great things, when he who built the ſtories of heaven, prefers the homely cottage to the royal palace, the lonely country to the luxurious city, and the tradeſman's tool to the prince's ſceptre. Hence, ſay the diſdainful hearers, "Is not this the carpenter?" Does not this ſweeten ſolitude, magnify meanneſs, and royalize ruſticity, where the time is ſpent with God?

And did the everlaſting Father live thirty years in deep obſcurity in this earth, when on the grand buſineſs of redemption, without any notice being taken of him?

But

But ſurely theſe years are in the glorious annals of eternity, and were a part of that infinite ſum he paid for the redemption of the choſen ones. He lived alone, and as it were deſolate, that we might never be left alone, or without the Comforter. Every breathing was for us, for whom he lived, for whom he died; every prayer of the powerful Interceſſor was for us, who prayed not for the world, but for them choſen out of the world.

But, O my ſoul! think what Love, what LOVER is this, who condeſcended to all humiliations, embraced every condition, taſted every grief, underwent all changes, ſuffered all ignominy; who was obnoxious to all reproaches, ſubject to every ſinleſs infirmity, obliged to charitable diſpoſitions; who was often hungry, faint, weary, fatigued, ſweating in the ſultry day, panting for a cup of cold water; who was never off his beaten feet but once, and that, though greater than Solomon, not in the chariots or horſes of Egypt, but on a borrowed aſs near Jeruſalem; who was contradicted by lawyers, calumniated by the Scribes, blaſphemed by the Phariſees, traduced by his faithleſs hearers, deſpiſed by his countrymen, betrayed by a daily follower, one of his little flock, deſerted by his diſciples, denied by a friend, condemned by the criminals his mercy ſpared, ſtript of his cloaths by thoſe he had cloathed with ſkin, and fenced with bones and ſinews, crowned with thorns, ſcourged and crucified by them whoſe breath was in his hand, and crucified by his own creatures.

ME-

MEDITATION VII.

THE JOY OF SALVATION.

Gulph of Lyons, July 3. 1759.

SHALL I ever think meanly of redeeming love? Though now and then I go mourning without the ſun, yet a day of ſweet communion is on the wing, when, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, ſo ſhall my well-beloved, amiable Jeſus, rejoice over me. What preſent comfort may it afford to my ſoul, that the eye of faith may look through the teleſcope of the promiſe, and ſee the acceptable time, when he who is the God of my ſalvation, the Bridegroom of my ſoul, ſhall rejoice over me with joy, ſhall reſt in his love, and rejoice over me with ſinging. How ſtupendous this! how ineffably glorious! But how can God be ſaid to ſing? Why, all the attributes of the divine nature, while mercy and truth meet together, while righteouſneſs and peace kiſs each other, break forth into eternal harmony in accompliſhing the plan of redeeming love. Every attribute is in ſong, every perfection is ſymphony and concord. Surely ſuch a ſweetneſs, ſuch a ſound, ſhall awaken in the ſanctified ones an anthem that ſhall never ceaſe, and begin an hallelujah which ſhall have no ſubſequent Selah! And ſhall I be ſilent in the raptures of love, the tranſports of eternity? No; I ſhall mingle my grateful notes with theirs, and commend that love that is the ſweetneſs of every ſubject, and the ſubject of every ſong; yea, and I ſhall liſten to notes ſweeter than the ſongs of ſeraphims, while

while the harmonizing attributes for ever ſing forth the glory of the divine perfections in the redemption of fallen man, which, compoſing all to harmony within, breaks my ſilence, and kindles ſuch love, that I ſhall roll in ecſtaſy, and live in ſong.

MEDITATION VIII.

THE EXCELLENCY OF REDEEMING LOVE.

Near Leghorn, March 22. 1759.

WHAT a wonder is this, that redeeming love, towards ſuch a worm as man is, ſhould put on the epithets of *infinite* and *eternal!* In this view, the man of God ſpeaks of the habitation his people had in his love, "before the mountains were brought forth, before the world was formed;" yea, to us in our glorious Head, "the promiſe of eternal life was made before the world began." This was, indeed, an early care, ſo early that it has no date. In the fulneſs of infinite joy, ſee, O ſoul! and ſing of his amiable condeſcendency; "his delights were with the ſons of men."

Surely his love has manifeſted more of his omnipotence to man, than all his attributes together. They have gone a great way to ſhew his matchleſs perfections, but love has gone to the laſt degree, to the extremeſt bound, and pours a whole Godhead into the boſom of the believer. His power brought a world into being; his wiſdom divided and diſpoſed it into harmony and order; his goodneſs provides, and his providence governs it,

it, but his love brings God and man together, who were at a diſtance which aſtoniſhed the heavens, and made the earth to tremble, and that in a way which nothing but infinite wiſdom could plan, infinite ſovereignty propoſe, infinite love undertake, and infinite power accompliſh and perfect. Thus, all the attributes of God are ſwallowed up of love. Hence God is ſaid to be love; intimating, as it were, that love is the reigning perfection of his nature, could there be any difference among perfections that are each of them infinite.

But who can expatiate on redeeming love? It is higher than heaven, what can I do? Deeper than hell, and delivers the ſoul out from the loweſt hell, what can I know? The meaſure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the ſea. To ſing its divine excellencies, for God is love, ſhall engage a whole heaven of harpers through eternity, and, for abundance of ſubject, not ſuffer them to reſt night or day, when, to my unſpeakable joy, I ſhall join the harmonious number, and accent the everlaſting ſong.

MEDITATION IX.

CHRIST ALTOGETHER LOVELY.

Gibraltar Mole, May 20. 1759.

It is the joint teſtimony of believers, that Chriſt is altogether lovely, fairer than the ſons of men. Yea, my ſoul echoes her amen, though I have had but imperfect views of his tranſcendent glory, and ſeen but a glimpſe

glimpſe of him. Now, if this is the caſe in the twilight of faith, how divinely fair wilt thou appear in the noon-tide of glory! Thou ſhalt, as it were, appear in ſtate, ſeated high on thy exalted throne, and all thy ranſomed ones ſhall ſtand beholding, admiring, adoring to eternity. Now, my love is but little, and yet, alas! that little is divided. Even the world and its vanities ſuit my love, and there is ſomething within, which, to my grief, when I bethink myſelf, gives theſe ſtrange lords too kindly a reception. Friends and relations alſo obtain too large a portion of my love. But, then, I ſhall only love him who is worthy to be loved, and I ſhall love the ſaints only for his likeneſs which they bear; then the neareſt relation who has no intereſt in him, ſhall not have the leaſt ſhare of my love, which ſhall wholly flow out on my Beloved.

O how tranſporting will the full view and permanent viſion be! Then ſhall I ſee thee in another light than before, and love thee at another rate than here. I am yet a ſtranger to the powers of divine love. I have only (though it has rendered all things in part but loſs and dung for Chriſt) heard the fame of it, in compariſon of what I ſhall feel in that day. Then I ſhall love without diſtraction, without diminution, and without end. Yea, all my powers within, in the ſunſhine of glory, ſhall break out into a flame, which ſhall never be extinguiſhed. How ſhall my ſoul, in the mount of communion, ſo partake of the divine nature, that ineffable glory and beauty ſhall ſhine in her, which no vail ſhall hide, no covering can conceal. O what a ſight a crucified Jeſus ſhall be then! Not as in the days when he was deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief. Thou haſt ſeen the travail

of thy ſoul, and art ſatisfied. Out of the ivory palaces thy ſhouting ſaints have made thee glad. I ſhall ſee thee, and be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs. But what that divine, that full, that transforming ſatisfaction ſhall be, muſt remain unknown till poſſeſſed. Yet, ſince the firſt fruits ſo raviſh, what muſt the joy of the vintage be! If the foretaſte have ſo much honied ſweetneſs, marrowy bliſs, how muſt the banquet of eternity abound! O for that naked view, when I ſhall ſee him as he is, behold him at my very hand, to depart no more, nor wear the obſcuring vail!

MEDITATION X.

IMMEASURABLENESS OF LOVE.

May 22. 1759.

Will I ever ſee the other ſide of redeeming love? I am on the brink of the vaſt ocean, but cannot glance the oppoſite ſhore. Can I ſound its profoundneſs? Have I ſeen the ſprings of this ſacred ſea, or walked in ſearch of the divine depth? Angels are immerged in its boundleſs floods, and all the hoſts of day ſing of its extenſion. The oftener my meditations wade theſe holy waters, they riſe the higher, and the wider ſpread, till all is overflowed. The oozing ſpring grows a rivulet, the rivulet enlarges to a river, the river ſpreads into a boundleſs ſea. O let me drink at the ſpring, bathe in the river, be carried down the current to ſwim for ever in the ſea!

Love

Love is a book that contains hidden bleſſings. O that the Lamb would looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof, and ſhew me thoſe wonders that are contained within! Was Jeſus' divine diſcourſe with aſtoniſhed Nicodemus but the earthly account of love? "I have told you earthly things;" what then muſt the heavenly declaration be! how much ſweeter than honey and the honeycomb! What can one born blind conceive of light? what can my carnal mind comprehend of love? I only know that "it paſſes knowledge." When Paul was rapt up to the region of love, he heard ſuch divine things, that he grew forgetful of his preſent ſtate, and wiſt not whether he were ſtill the man Paul, or his ſoul let into the liberty of eternal day, and entered on his ſtate of glory, till, when the viſion left him, he found himſelf ſtill fettered to clay. Yet, what he had heard, what he had ſeen, it "was unlawful to utter." What, then, muſt love be? is it not worthy of all my meditations? and will the periſhing things of the world ſtep in between me and love, and ſit chief in my thoughts, ſupreme in mine affections?

O ſtupidity! O carnality! O curſe! thus to forget my bliſs, and buſy myſelf with the wind. Surely, if I talk of love, I am ſwallowed up; for my words darken rather than declare it; my conceptions rather conceal than comprehend it. Is there any number of the drops of the ſea, or the ſand of the ſhore? far leſs of love, that is excellent in all reſpects. I will go out in the extenſions of unfathomable love, and be loſt in its overflowing fulneſs.

MEDITATION XI.

SAINTS THE SONS OF GOD.

Gibraltar Mole, May 25. 1759.

"HEAR, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! for the Lord hath ſpoken. I have nouriſhed and brought up children," even ſome of the rebellious race of Adam, for the eternal manſions of glory. What wonders dwell in redeeming love! the ſons of men taken into the family of heaven! O who hath believed the report of theſe things! O amazing proſpect! Shall the lawful captive be delivered, or the prey of the terrible taken away? Yes, the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails to do all this. O intereſting ſcene! hell gapes below to ſwallow up the guilty wretch, heaven opens above to receive the ranſomed ſinner. O amazing kindneſs! O tranſcendent love! O precious ſufferings! O victorious death, by which the dry bones in the valley grow a great hoſt, even the ſons of the living God! O ſtrange! that the poor who lie in the duſt of deſtruction, and beggars who embrace the dunghill of depraved nature, ſhould be raiſed up to ſit with the princes of eternity, angels, the firſt ſons of light, yea, made joint-heirs with Chriſt; that, in one word, all things are theirs. Now, what is the power, what the excellence, what the vaſtneſs of redeeming love? "Now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is." This is the ſight that is the ſum of felicity in the higher houſe. O high privilege! royal prerogative! to be of the family of heaven, the houſe-

hold

hold of God, where the ſons are all as kings, and with him ſhall reign for ever and ever.

MEDITATION XII.

REDEEMING LOVE THE PERPETUAL THEME.

Gibraltar Mole, May 27. 1759.

Now have I begun my ſong of redeeming love, which ſhall never, never end. It conſiſt of two parts; the one in poſſeſſion of part, and expectation of more; the other in poſſeſſion of the whole inheritance of glory. This, with pleaſure I mutter in imperfect ſtrains here; that, with rapture I ſhall ſing in raviſhing ſtrains hereafter. Affliction ſhall not cauſe me to ſtop; for "in the night his ſong ſhall be with me." Deſertion ſhall only bring in a comma, not a full period, or pauſe; for he will not hide his face for ever, nor retain his anger ſtill. Even death ſhall not ſhut me up in ſilence; for when I lie expiring in the graſp of death, with my tongue faultering, and my lips unable to expreſs a word, my deſirable condition ſhall exalt redeeming love. Yea, death ſhall only finiſh the firſt part of the ſong, that I may turn the page, and begin the ſecond, that ſhall know no end.

But, O how, at my very firſt entrance on my eternal ſong, ſhall I be raviſhed with delight! Though the divine ſubject be the ſame, yet the views are quite different. Here, I ſee but darkly through a glaſs; there, face to face. Here he is, in great part, the unſeen

Chriſt whom I love; but there I ſhall ſee him as he is. Every thing in this howling wilderneſs hinders my anthem; but there all ſhall break out into melodious harmony and ſong. How loudly ſhall I blow the trumpet of praiſe in the jubilee of eternity, and every breath exalt redeeming love! Here I am at a loſs what to conceive of love, though the ſubject be infinite, ſuch is the narrowneſs of my ſoul, in conſequence of indwelling ſin; but there I ſhall be at a loſs to utter my conceptions, ſuch enlarged views of divine love ſhall pour in on me in an even and uninterrupted ſucceſſion for eternity. The unclouded views of thy glorious ſelf ſhall aſſimilate my ſoul to thee, and the naked diſplay of thy love ſhall inſpire my ſong of all thy perfections.

O light incomprehenſible, and full of a glory too bright to be deſcribed! O unfathomable love, dearer to me than life! what ſhall I ſay of love? "If a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would be utterly contemned." To dive into redeeming love is the only exerciſe proper to the immortal ſoul, and brings in the profuſeſt ſpiritual advantage. By this I link two worlds together, and ſhare the excellencies of both; while the amazing ſcene of redeeming love, and the meritorious ſufferings of the anointed One, are my pleaſant meditation with reſpect to this world, and his victorious aſcenſion into the higheſt heavens, and ſitting at the Father's right hand as my exalted Head, makes the proſpect of the other world ſwell with pleaſure. For, what had the world been, if he had not come down to ſave? and what would heaven be, if the ſame that firſt deſcended into the lower parts of the earth had not alſo aſcended up far above all heavens, that he might fill

fill all in all, might plead my cauſe, and prepare a manſion for me?

What childiſh entertainment is it to ſhare thrones and divide kingdoms, in compariſon of enjoying the ſubſtantial good things of divine love! Thoſe at laſt awake from the ſleep of death, with nothing in their hand; but I ſhake off my ſlumber, to receive a crown, or, what ſhould be more dear to me, to be put in a ſtate of perfection, and ſo enabled to love my Beloved in an exalted manner, to grieve him no more who has been all kindneſs to me, to ſerve him without ceaſing, and praiſe him without intermiſſion. Let the worldly-minded men poſſeſs and be pleaſed with worldly things; but give me to walk up and down in the largeneſs of redeeming love, to be delighted and dwell on that divine theme, redeeming love, whoſe overflowing fulneſs ſhall employ through the ages of eternity all the ſanctified ones.

MEDITATION XIII.

CHRIST CARRIES HIS OWN CROSS.

Gulph of Lyons, July 4. 1759.

Where were all his friends and followers now, that his ſhoulders, lately furrowed with the cruel ſcourge, muſt bear the ponderous tree on which he was to ſuffer? Not one dares offer his aſſiſtance; yea, the boldeſt follow afar off, with bleeding hearts, their condemned Lord. Behold how our New-Teſtament Iſaac, this Son

of

of the everlaſting Father, and the Son of the covenant and promiſe, takes up the wood and bears it on his ſhoulders, knowing both whither and to what end he went. Such was his divine good will to ſuffer for my ſin, and that at a time, after the ſtrugglings with divine vengeance, which ſet him a-ſweating blood, after cruel ſcourgings which he meekly underwent, when more fit for a ſoft bed, cordials, and reſtoratives, than for further drudgery and toil. Yet he bends his ſacred back, and takes on the ignominious tree, and bears it on without a word, till it ſhould ſeem ſtrength fails on his ſide, whoſe ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful even unto death. And how could it elſe be, when divine vengeance was pouring on him through every power within? No wonder his bones parted out of joint, when his blood burſt the containing veins, and fell in great drops. Yet not one among the multitude pitied him, not one is there to help, had not a ſtranger paſſed by, whom they compelled to carry it. O the ſtrength of love! he endured the croſs, deſpiſed the ſhame, "was led as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth."

It was not the weight of the croſs that weakened him; there was above this weight a burden of another nature, the imputed guilt of the elect world; and there was a ponderous load above this burden, divine wrath. But, above this load, behold there lay a cruſhing mountain, the hidings of his Father's countenance, of which, as being moſt intolerable, he complains heavily, "My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?" And did he undergo all this for me? carry his own croſs in the midſt of a mocking multitude, that I might not bear the curſe among devils and damned ſpirits for ever?

Shall

Shall I, then, ever be aſhamed of going out to him, bearing my reproach, who ſuffered without the gate? Shall I decline the taking up my croſs and following him through good report and bad report, who has left me ſuch a glorious example?

MEDITATION XIV.

THE SACRED ESPOUSALS.

July 28. 1759.

The moſt part of the world have thoſe with whom they expect to be united before their eyes; but ſhe that is born to a crown, and will accept a kingdom, muſt marry one perchance ſhe never ſaw, conſent by proxy, and, to complete the nuptials, and enjoy her royal conſort, leave her own houſe never to ſee it more, her native country never to return, take an everlaſting farewell of her neareſt relations, and then ſet out for a foreign kingdom, or go beyond ſeas, as it were into another world. Even ſo, while the greateſt part of the world are wedded to the vanities of the world, thoſe who would riſe to the crown that fadeth not away, to the kingdom that cannot be moved, muſt accept of Him who cannot be ſeen but by the eye of faith, and believing the faithful ambaſſadors who come with the warrant of the everlaſting goſpel to eſpouſe chaſte virgins to Chriſt, muſt ſay, I will go with the man.

The princes of the earth ſend by their ambaſſadors jewels of gold and precious ſtones; but Chriſt, by his ambaſſadors,

ambaſſadors, beſtows on them a right and title to all the treaſures of eternity, and has given to them exceeding great and precious promiſes, whereby they are made partakers of the divine nature, and begin to taſte of immortality itſelf. In natural marriages, the titles and honours of the young princeſs may be changed to the better, but her perſon, faculties, and features, remain the ſame; but in the ſpiritual eſpouſals, the Spirit, who by inclining the ſoul to accept the offer, brings about the happy match, makes her all glorious within, and puts on the embroidered garment, making her to walk in newneſs of life.

Now, O ſaint! if this be thy bleſſed condition, why wilt thou caſt a longing eye around thee on thoſe things that thou muſt ſhortly leave? Nothing muſt come between thy affection and Chriſt; he is thy Lord, and thou muſt worſhip him. Live like one of the royal family of heaven, like a princeſs of the blood-royal, like one born from above; live above the deceitful flatteries of a falſe, and the dejecting frowns of an unfriendly world. Let thy father's houſe be forgotten, and thy native land eſtranged to thee, looking out for the better inheritance. But while abſent, let him often hear from thee, for he deſires it. "Thou that dwelleſt in the gardens, the companions, hearken to thy voice; cauſe me to hear it." Come to his throne with boldneſs, pray with an humble freedom, be frequently in his preſence, pour thy complaints into his boſom. There is none more ſympathizing than he; his bowels yearn with love. Make thy requeſts to him; what will he with-hold who hath given thee himſelf? He is thy brother, embrace him in the arms of faith, for thou ſhalt not be deſpiſed. Wait for him; he is making all things ready for thy reception,

reception, preparing a manſion in his Father's houſe for thee, and in a little he will ſend a glorious guard for thee, which would darken the grandeur of the greateſt kings. Wilt thou grudge to leave thy native country to go to him? to launch out into the ocean of eternity, in order to reach the world of bliſs, where the marriage of the Lamb ſhall be celebrated without intermiſſion, without end? The joy, the glory, and ecſtaſy of which day, I leave to thy further reflections, O ſaint! who ſhalt be one of them that ſhall ſit at meat with HIM.

MEDITATION XV.

THE ETERNITY OF LOVE.

Sept. 30. 1759.

THERE is one conſideration that may ſtrike me with profoundeſt wonder, and that is, the ancientneſs of redeeming love; that the love he bore to the choſen ones ſhould be eternal: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." The elect had a place in the purpoſes of love from eternity, even ſo early that it has no date; for we muſt look for a beginning to the Supreme BEING, and ſince we can never find that, we can never find a beginning to his love: So early did he rejoice in the habitable parts of his earth, ſo early were his delights with the ſons of men. And once in his thoughts, once in his love and favour, never out again.

How has the high and mighty ONE thought on me from eternity ſo intenſely, that I have never been one moment

moment out of his thought, but always of the number of thoſe with whom were his delights; and do I ſeldom think on him? O baſe and treacherous heart, I will never forgive thee. O pernicious pleaſures! I will leave my curſe upon you. O numerous concerns and cares! could I but ſhake myſelf free of you, and be diſentangled from corruption, that my ſoul might pour itſelf out on him, melted down into grateful thoughts and ſtrains of praiſe. I will leave my complaint upon myſelf; for while I complain, the cauſe of my complaints continues. Let me henceforth huſband my thoughts better than ever I have done, that the innumerable multitudes of vain, impertinent rovings, may be turned into pious breathings after Him who at ſuch a rate has thought on me. Surely he is eternally beforehand with me; for though he had thought on me in love but a little before I could have thought on him, yet his thoughts of love are the thoughts of a God, and therefore infinite; but mine of a mere creature, and therefore finite.

I have juſt one comfort, which is, that the day is approaching, when my thoughts, finite as they are, ſhall flow wholly out on him. Not one wandering thought ſhall vex me more. My ſoul, ſanctified in all her faculties, and invigorated in all her powers, ſhall eternally go out on Him with complacency and delight.

ME-

MEDITATION XVI.

THE HALF HAS NOT BEEN TOLD US.

Quiberon Bay, Nov. 15. 1759.

WHAT pleaſant views may the followers of the Lamb have with reſpect to the world to come! Surely when I ſhall ſet my foot on the threſhold of glory, and am admitted into the preſence of the Prince of peace, I may accoſt the chiefeſt among ten thouſand, the faireſt of the ſons of men, in a ſublimer ſtrain than Sheba's queen did the then wonder of the world, Solomon.

Let me, as it were, anticipate the bleſſed day, the divine congreſs. O my ſupreme good, my eternal delight, how am I loſt at once in wonder, to find my very entrance into bliſs exceed the brighteſt deſcriptions that ever reached mine ears! When I ſee the manſions thou haſt prepared in thy Father's houſe for thy choſen ones; when I ſee the glory thou appeareſt in, even in our nature; when I ſee the immortaliſing manna on the table of glory, the gorgeous apparel, the wedding-garments of the gueſts of the Lamb, and their aſtoniſhing ſitting at the ſacred ſupper; when I look round and ſee all the inhabitants of bliſs, every one ſitting in thy emanations, baſking in thy beams, and walking in the light of thy countenance for ever; when I liſten and hear angels, numerous as the pleaſures that overflow in thy preſence, exalting thee in inimitable lays, cherubims and ſeraphims pouring forth hallelujahs with all the harmony of rapture, and all the ranſomed ones hymning forth thy praiſe, how do I confeſs the ſcanty report, the confined

account of thee and all thine adorable perfections, all thy boundleſs bliſs which I heard in mine own land, the lower world! Even the teleſcope of revelation gave but a dim glance in compariſon of the brightneſs of thy glory. The goſpel of peace, and the words of life, it is true, drew aſide the vail, and gave a tranſient view of ſome of thy perfections; but what could the human eye ſee through the thick fogs of ſin and corruption? what could an ear planted on a body of ſin and death receive of heavenly things, or an heart groaning in a mouldering tabernacle, in the vale of miſery, conceive of ſuch tranſcendent excellencies? The half, nay, Lord, the hundredth part was never told me; but now I am come to thee, and find thee ſurpaſſing my hope, mine expectation, and my faith, in their utmoſt extenſion. I believed thee, indeed, to be glorious, but never believed thee ſo glorious as I now behold thee. Faith in the promiſes took many a refreſhing, though diſtant look, of the King in his beauty; but now I ſee thee as thou art, and behold thee face to face. The days wherein I commemorated the ſufferings of my divine Redeemer afforded me the moſt refined delight, and a ſpiritual refreſhment, ſomething a-kin to the joys of heaven; now eternity is one ſuch day to me. "O how fair art thou, O my Beloved! Yea, pleaſant, alſo our bed is green." The pleaſures that ſpring from the ſpiritual eſpouſals ſhall never paſs away, but flouriſh in perpetual verdure.

ME-

MEDITATION XVII.

THE GUILTY ACQUITTED, THE JUST CAST.

Feb. 19. 1759.

"NOT this man, but Barabbas," was the cry of the Jews, when the Lamb of God ſtood unjuſtly condemned before them. But, who was this Barabbas? perhaps an innocent man? no, he was a murderer, and yet acquitted, while innocence, eternal innocence, was caſt. Yet what elſe could be expected from an ignorant, enraged rabble, ſet on by the malice and ſpleen of the prieſts, Scribes, and Phariſees?

But, methinks I hear the God of hoſts himſelf ſay, 'Let Barabbas go free; let the human race, who in their inſurrection and rebellion againſt the Lord of heaven and earth have committed murder on their own ſouls, and ſo become ſelf-deſtroyers, yet let them go free; I have found a ranſom; I have ſo loved the world, that I have ſent my Son to be the Saviour of the world, and delivered him up to the death for them all.' Yea, I hear the Son himſelf ſaying, 'I lay down my life for my ſheep; take me, but let theſe go their way.' The deſire of the Jews was deteſtable cruelty, but the decree of God aſtoniſhing kindneſs. This will be the wonder of the ranſomed world, that the guilty ſhould go free at ſuch a rate, at ſuch a ranſom, the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without ſpot. Here ſovereignty ſhines ineffably glorious, and mercy in triumphant exultation rejoices againſt judgement. Here I admire, adore, and glory, for evermore.

MEDITATION XVIII.

AN ANGEL STRENGTHENING HIM.

Under Sail, Gibraltar, Feb. 19. 1759.

Lo, the celeſtial form takes his willing flight from before the throne of glory, to attend his own Creator in a ſituation that aſtoniſhes the whole hoſt of angels, and makes the whole pillars of heaven to tremble. Seraphs are faithful to their Lord, when the whole creation proves unkind. The treacherous diſciple is betraying his Maſter; the murderers are telling out the price of blood; a poor price, indeed, for ſuch a pearl, ſuch a precious one; the diſciples, like Saul's thin army, follow him trembling, and in a little after forſake him and fly; the laſt draught of the cup he for us was to drink is putting into his hand; and, indeed, this mingled vengeance was ſuch a bitter mixture, that he groans beneath the growing agonies, yea, and needs. But what aſſiſtance could he receive from a hand which his own hand had made? What could an angel do to the God of angels? Though heaven had been emptied of its firſt ſons of light, yet they could not all have atoned even for the ſin I have committed this morning, much leſs for that of an elect world. See, then, his matchleſs love, that he is overborne with agony on mine account, and rues not, and repines not. See my wretched condition, and woful cauſe. None would, none could, engage in it but HE, ever-bleſſed, altogether lovely HE, and then his human nature needs the aſſiſtance of an angel. Such was the wrath he bore for me. Shall

I ever forget the ſtruggling moments of my deareſt Saviour in my ſtead, or glory in any thing but Chriſt and him crucified.

MEDITATION XIX.

CHRIST HAVING NO HOUSE.

Gibraltar Bay, Aug. 10. 1759.

When the God of glory tabernacled below, ſeeing heaven was his throne, and the earth his footſtool, what was the houſe they built for him, or what palace was the place of his reſt? Ah! among all the coſtly buildings in the world, not one ſtone was laid above another for his reception. He is obliged to a tender friend for a night's lodging, and is ſometimes in the deſart place, or lonely mountain, all the night long. He that had given life and being, and appointed the bounds of their habitations to all the families of the earth, has not an houſe himſelf. The birds of the air, though ſo fearful, and ſo ſoon ſcared away, yet return to their neſts with ſafety; yea, the foxes, who have ſo many enemies, have their holes for ſecurity, and ſo ſhare both ſafety and ſhelter; but the Son of man, the Son of God, the God of men and angels, has not where to lay his head, or a place of repoſe that he could claim as his own.

Ah! in what a deplorable condition was I, that, when he came in my ſtead, it fared ſo ill with him! I had forfeited all, and made myſelf poor; and ſo, though he was rich, yet for my ſake he became poor, that I through his poverty might be made rich. O the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ! The Heir of all things has neither house nor home, that prodigals, who had wasted all, might have mansions of glory in his Father's house! He hath not where to lay his head in the day he came to redeem from death, that I might repose on the bowels of mercy, and lean on everlasting love! Hence shall I prepare him a lodging in my soul, who, when working out my salvation, had not where to lodge. He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation in my inmost heart, and attend my glorious guest with all my glowing affections, till I dwell with him above.

MEDITATION XX.

REDEMPTION ASTONISHING.

Gibraltar Bay, Aug. 11. 1759.

How astonishing is my salvation in many respects! not only the reason why, mere love and sovereign mercy; the manner how, by amazing sufferings; the time when, in due time, even in the fulness of time; but the person by whom, the eternal Son of God. How may I be lost in wonder when I consider that the author of my eternal salvation was God, my creator, my governor, one that I had made mine enemy through sin, and against whom my heart was become enmity; one that, through the divine rectitude of his nature, could not but hate me, as I, from the depravity of mine, could not love him! It is true, that none but God could redeem; but it is astonishing that God should condescend to redeem, that the

the Father of ſpirits ſhould, at ſuch a rate, ranſom the work of his hands! But in this God recommends, and that very highly, his love to us, "in that, while we were yet ſinners," and ſo unconcerned about our ſtate that we could not make one requeſt to be reſtored again to friendſhip, and ſo full of enmity, that we would not put up one petition to have the feud removed, but all we thought, ſpake, did, only tended to heighten his divine diſpleaſure, and to incenſe him more and more; yet then, even then, he was full of pity, he would ranſom, he would ſave, he would redeem and love our ſouls out of the pit of corruption! O ſurpriſing grace and good-will! O aſtoniſhing ſovereignty! O infinite, free, triumphant love! before which mountains melt away, oceans are dried up, impediments remove, the howlings of deſpair ceaſe, and tranſporting hallelujahs employ the grateful tongue! On them that ſat in the region and ſhadow of death, pours down eternal day! Death throws down the leaden ſceptre, and everlaſting life extends the blooming rod!

The undertaking is aſtoniſhing, when I conſider by whom, even by God! but the effects are glorious, when I conſider what they are, even ſalvation, holineſs, life, light, pardon, peace, joy, and all things that are worthy of a God to give. Thou waſt ready to ſave from the loweſt pit of corruption; therefore will I ſing my ſongs to thee all the days of my life; but ſince that ſhall end, and thy love has no bound; therefore will I continue them through all the ages of thine eternity, which I ſhall poſſeſs in thy preſence.

ME-

MEDITATION XXI.

BEHOLD HOW HE LOVED THEM!

Sept. 30.

What a few Jews ſaid, who ſaw our Saviour weep at the tomb of a deceaſed Lazarus, whom he loved ſo as to reſtore him to life, ſurely all the angels with aſtoniſhment may ſay of Him, who, at the grave of a dead world, loved them to his own death, and "gave his life a ranſom for many," that they might be written among the living in Jeruſalem,—Behold how he loved them! He has given the ſtrongeſt proof of the ſtrongeſt love: "Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friend." There may be many inſtances of men dying for their friends, but was there ever an inſtance of a God-man dying for the worms of the earth? None but this; for he has not often ſuffered, but "once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf;" and this will remain the only wonder through eternity. Yea, while the wonders of creating power ſparkle like ſo many ſtars, redeeming love ſhall ſhine like the meridian ſun. Who can tell how he loved them? He loved them before they loved him; and he loved them to the end; yea, he loved them immutably. No ſhame, no pangs, no ſufferings, could make him change his love; even death itſelf, which brings a revolution to all things, could make no impreſſion

impreſſion on his firm, his fixed, his ſtable love. But, in a word, he loved them infinitely; and here we muſt ſtand aſtoniſhed; for as none but an infinite being can comprehend infinite love, ſo his love, in its height and depth, breadth and length, is known to none but himſelf. Though ſaints and angels ſhall be bleſſed in the higheſt degree with the eternal outpourings of his love, which will always remain full and overflowing, yet in this ocean, heaven and earth are loſt. But while ſome, yea, all the ſaints, in a ſurpriſe of joy, may ſay, Behold how infinitely he loved us! how may I, in a ſurpriſe of grief, cry out, O how faintly I love him!

MEDITATION XXII.

COMMUNICANTS ENJOY CHRIST'S PERSONAL PRESENCE IN HEAVEN.

May 24. 1764.

We who have been commemorating the ſufferings, and admiring the love of our divine Redeemer, ſhall in a little be bleſſed with his perſonal preſence; for "he ſhall come again the ſecond time, without ſin unto ſalvation;" yea, and "he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry." Then every eye ſhall ſee him; but ſome, alas! ſhall behold, and tremble; others look up, and rejoice. Then thoſe who now ſcorn to caſt their eyes on the Saviour of the world, as ſuſpended on the pole of the goſpel, ſhall ſee him only once, and that when he is arrayed in all his terrors, to give ſentence againſt his miſerable deſpiſers, "who ſhall be puniſhed with

with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" nor shall they ever see the lovely, the long-suffering Jesus again. But we, who with delight would fain search into the mystery of God incarnate, and admire the love of our dying Lord, shall see him as he is, and never more bewail an absent Beloved, but find an eternal banquet on the beauties of his face.

If here an unseen Christ be worthy of our belief, a crucified Jesus of our adorations, a chastising, afflicting Lord, of our subjection, and an hiding Beloved of our continual search; surely there our dear Redeemer, personally present for ever, our once-crucified Saviour, highly exalted above every name in the highest heavens, our once correcting Lord speaking to the heart of every saint in the tenderest dialect of love, and revealing all his divine excellencies to their eternal joy, will ravish and delight all the adorers of the God of heaven. Does the voice of our Beloved revive us, when coming leaping on the distant mountains, skipping over the hiding hills; then with what rapture must it inspire his intrepid attendants, to hear him open the wonders of the upper world on his lofty throne!

There is a noble table furnished for eternity in the highest heavens, the very wonder of angelic hosts, and the brightest instance of the liberality of the divine Provider. Though neither bread nor wine are there, (and blessed be his name that we are allowed these symbols here), yet there is a never-ending plenitude in the land of glory; yea, the Lamb of God is the amazing, the matchless fare in this feast of love, and not one who ever worthily commemorated the agonies of the divine Sufferer, but shall sit down at the mar-

riage-

riage-ſupper of the Lamb, and be entertained by himſelf with all the dainties of the banquet of wine. And, as at the firſt inſtitution of this ſolemn ſupper, our renowned Immanuel and his faithful few ſung a hymn, ſo, in the eternal celebration of the aſtoniſhing cataſtrophe, a dying God, or a damned world, all the ranſomed, with a gratitude peculiar to the inhabitants of bliſs, and warblings proper to the birds of paradiſe, ſhall ſing a new, a non-ſuch ſong, to that dear, that darling, that divine "Him, that loved them, and in his own blood waſhed them from all their ſins." Well, then, as long as I am a communicant below, and beſet with ſins and ſorrows, and often mourning an inſenſible heart, and a withdrawing Jeſus, I will meditate on this happy day, when I ſhall meet above my beſt Beloved in perſon, and never part again.

MEDITATION XXIII.

THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED.
LUKE, xxiv. 34.

June 19. 1792.

"JOSEPH is yet alive," was news ſo ſweet, ſo unexpected, ſo aſtoniſhing, that Jacob faints; but *Jesus lives*, and *lives for evermore*, may ſtill more raviſh the ſoul of every Chriſtian. Every one that reads the hiſtory of Joſeph, muſt feel with Iſrael in the exceſs of his ſorrow, and in the exceſs of his joy; but every one that reads the hiſtory of Jeſus, in his ſufferings, and in his reſurrection, ſhould be filled with godly ſorrow at his own

own ſins, and with joy unſpeakable and full of glory at his Saviour's exaltation.

Joſeph is ſold by his brethren; Jeſus is too often crucified afreſh, and put to open ſhame, by his profeſſed children. Joſeph ſerves one maſter, then another; Jeſus performs kind offices to all. Joſeph is put in priſon and in fetters for no offence; Jeſus, for offences not his own, is made priſoner, bound, condemned, crucified, and laid in the priſon of the grave. Joſeph is ſet at liberty by the commandment of the king; Jeſus is raiſed by the glory of the Father, who is Lord of lords, and King of kings. Joſeph is made governor over all the land, ſenators and princes are put under his power; Jeſus is exalted as Lord of heaven and earth, angels, and principalities, and powers, being ſubject to him. Divine Providence ſends Joſeph into Egypt to preſerve Jacob and his family alive in the famine that was to come on all lands; but love, paſſing all deſcription, thought, and conception, ſends Jeſus into our world to redeem a part of Adam's family from ſin and wrath, that had overſpread all nations. Joſeph preſerves thouſands from an untimely death, by opening his ſtore-houſes; but Jeſus ſaves from ſin, and hell, and wrath, an elect world, by opening the treaſures of his grace and righteouſneſs. Joſeph ſells his corn for money and for price; Jeſus gives, and invites to take, wine and milk, grace and glory, without money, and without price. Joſeph, to his own brethren, appears ſtrange, and ſpeaks roughly; Jeſus extends heart-kindneſs to his worſt enemies, ſpeaks peace, and pleads for them, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." All that eat of Joſeph's corn, ſooner or later died; but all that eat the bread

of

of life, that came down from heaven, ſhall never die.

O my New-Teſtament Joſeph! thou art alive, who once for my ſake waſt crucified, dead, and buried, and art Lord over all the land of glory. Thou wilt fall on my neck in the divine embraces of love; and I ſhall weep for joy when I ſee thy greatneſs, and my intereſt in thy greatneſs. But O! what ſhall I ſay, who too often have had a hand of ſelling thee into Egypt, of denying thee, and being aſhamed of thy ſervice, and my relation to thee! Shall I not be confounded at thy preſence? Thy kindneſs will cover my faults, thy love will forget my unkindneſſes, and all heaven ſhall ſound with ſhouts, and ſongs, and Hoſannas, that Jeſus, who was once dead, is now alive, and lives for evermore, Amen, and is Lord over all. When called to come to thee, and who can tell how ſoon? what need I regard the ſtuff of earthly things, ſince the good of all the better world, the glory of all the heavens, is before me? Said Jacob, "It is enough, Joſeph is yet alive; I will go and ſee him before I die:" Says my ſoul, It is enough, Jeſus is alive who died for me, Jeſus is enthroned in glory; I will go and ſee him at my death, I will go to him who is my own brother, and ſee and ſhare in all his mediatorial glory for ever.

A

WORD

IN

TIME OF NEED;

OR, A FEW

THOUGHTS IN HONOUR OF RELIGION:

RECOMMENDED TO THE

SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF ALL.

A

WORD

IN

TIME OF NEED.

WHEN times are ſo deplorably degenerate, that he who departs from iniquity makes himſelf, if not a prey to *rage*, yet a ſpeech to *ridicule*, the cauſe of which is that univerſal *contempt* which is poured upon religion from all quarters: I ſay, when matters are lamentably thus, what can be a fitter ſubject to employ the pen than a few thoughts in *honour* of religion?

Were this antipathy, may I call it? againſt godlineſs *only* ſhewn by a few in the loweſt ſpheres of life, by the *dregs* and *refuſe* of the people, I ſhould confine my obſervations to theſe; but ſince man's enmity againſt religion is ſo general, and has poiſoned ſome in every rank, from the dunghill to the throne, in its encomium I muſt beg leave to be ſomewhat particular.

I ſhall not ſtand to prove the truth of natural and revealed religion, or that the God in whom we live is to

worſhipped by all his dependent creatures, which is our reaſonable ſervice. This is confeſſed on all hands, by heathens as well as Chriſtians; for the moſt barbarous Pagans pay ſome reſpect to a Being whom they believe to be above themſelves, and that can *help* or *hurt* them, though their ignorance makes them worſhip they know not what. But the Chriſtian world, favoured with divine revelation, not only know *whom*, but *how* they ought to worſhip. And the deiſts' fruitleſs efforts to overthrow revelation, and the religion therein revealed, only prove the divinity of both; for while, in theſe latter times, they depart from the faith, they ſtrengthen what they attempt to deſtroy, by fulfilling the ſacred prediction. Nor is their embittered malice againſt religion a dull encomium on its divine power, that produces ſuch a noble change in the ſoul where it triumphs, ſince the ſame enmity is naturally in all.

It will not be improper, before we proceed, to let the reader know what is meant by *religion* in the following pages. It is, then, twofold, *Firſt*, Internal, or a life of faith on the Son of God, manifeſted by a ſolid, unequivocal belief of every divine truth contained in the ſcriptures, and accompanied with all the heavenly train of active graces. This will produce, *Secondly*, External religion, or a beautiful diſcharge of every Chriſtian duty, incumbent on us to God, our neighbour, and ourſelves.

With controverſies in religion we meddle not; but ſhall only advance ſome truths, by way of obſervation, in honour of religion, that the men who deſpiſe it may fall in love with it, and that thoſe who eſpouſe it may not be aſhamed of their choice, when they hear the ſame thereof,

thereof, though (as once was ſaid of Solomon's) the tenth part cannot be told.

In THE FIRST PLACE, then, we obſerve, in honour of religion, that there is a *reality* in it, elſe it were in vain to proceed, and inſiſt on the excellencies of a mere imagination. Were it a mere imagination, we in the Chriſtian world would be more miſerable than all the heathen round about, and the ſaints, who exerciſe themſelves therein night and day, were of all men moſt miſerable. But though it has been branded with the odious names of *enthusiasm* and *delusion*, and its profeſſors accounted mad, yet it has a ſeal and ſtamp of *reality*, which the rage of enemies never can efface.

First, There is a reality in religion, in reſpect of its glorious Author; for here every one muſt confeſs, *This is the finger of God.* Though an abandoned world have nicknamed it *priest-craft*, and the contrivance of politicians to keep the world in awe, yet it is the wiſdom that comes from above, and ſhines with the divine features of its adored Author.

Secondly, It is real in reſpect of its object, which is God, and whoſe Spirit begins and carries it on until the day of Chriſt. Other things may be the effect of impoſture and credulity, but religion can boaſt of a divine origin; for, as God cannot be tempted himſelf, nor tempt any, ſo neither can he be deceived, nor deceive any, which ſurely would be the caſe if religion were not real. To admit that religion is nothing elſe than an airy dream, a ſyſtem of fine-ſpun ſpeculations, would bring into the world Atheiſm, and would be a flat denial of the end for which the "grace of God hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, and righteouſly, and

and godly in this preſent world, looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God, and and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt."

Thirdly, There is a *reality* in religion with reſpect to the ſoul in which it prevails. It is no airy phantom, pleaſing dream, or fond deluſion, but carries in it its own evidence, and may be better underſtood than expreſſed. It prevails in every power of mind, ſhines in every faculty, and appears in the whole inner man. To the ſoul, indeed, nothing but religion, nothing but the life divine, is, properly ſpeaking, real. The world and the faſhion thereof paſſeth away, honour is but a glow-worm blaze, fame a tranſient ſound, and the collection of all created pleaſures but a ſucceſſion of revolving phantoms, which cannot look death in the face, much leſs God, when ſeated on a judgement-throne; but the fore-thoughts and faith of future glory ſpread a ſweet ſerenity over the mind, and pour in a more ſolid joy into the ſoul than can ſpring from the preſent poſſeſſion of the univerſe itſelf.

Where religion preſides, it gives a pleaſing proof of its reality in taking the eye of the ſoul off external objects, and directing it towards eternity, where ſights and ſcenes of infinitely more weight and moment than a diviſion of thrones, and diſtribution of kingdoms, claim all the attention, and nobly improve the perſon for the world to come.

Fourthly, The duties of religion are real, and do not ſtand in forms and geſtures, in modes and veſtments. *Faith* and *hope*, *love* and *fear*, *penitence* and *patience*, *contentment* and *reſignation*, are more than nominal in the Chriſtian's ſoul. So alſo the practical duties of religion are realized in their daily converſation. Of every one of

of them it may be ſaid, as once of Paul, "Behold he prayeth!" and they offer the ſacrifice of praiſe daily, as their reaſonable ſervice; and, as by the firſt they are ſupported in their militant ſtate, ſo by the laſt they join the triumphant throng, and ſhare the happineſs of the higher houſe. Their meditations alſo of God afford them ſweet thoughts, while they ſteal away from a noiſy world to taſte the joys above, and pluck ſome of the firſt-ripe fruits of glory. So, by ſelf-examination they retire into themſelves, try their ownſelves, diſcern their own condition, and how matters ſtand for eternity, and towards God. Nor is the reading of the ſcriptures, or attending the ordinances neglected, where true devotion exiſts. Hence, the Pſalmiſt crys out in a tranſport, "O how I love thy law! it is my ſtudy all the day." And elſewhere, "I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the Lord."

Moreover, as they are daily exerciſed in the more ordinary duties of religion, ſo, in their proper ſeaſon, they neglect not the more extraordinary and ſolemn, as faſting and communicating. Yea, this is not all; for the believer's ſoul, now and then, more or leſs, in theſe duties, enjoys communion with God, while, by his Spirit, he dwells in them, and they by faith in him.

Again, if we view the *reality* of religion in the ſaints, with reſpect to ſocial or relative duties, it will ſtill commend itſelf to all. He can do good for ill, forgive an injury, and overlook an affront, feed the poor, and ſupport the falling, and give a living proof, that "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To viſit the widows and fatherleſs in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world."

Fifthly,

Fifthly, The ſaints are bleſſed with a *real* and divine aſſiſtance, by which they are carried through all the duties of religion. Hence, ſays the apoſtle, "We know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; but the SPIRIT itſelf maketh interceſſion for us (that is, in us) with groanings which cannot be uttered." This divine aſſiſtance is promiſed by our Saviour, where he ſays, "I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;" and where he forbids the diſciples to premeditate what they ſhall anſwer before judges: "For," ſays he, "it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you." We have a notable inſtance of this ſacred aſſiſtance in Abraham, under the greateſt trial, whereby he came off the greateſt conqueror, and in Jacob, who, through the Spirit of grace and ſupplications, wreſtled with the God of grace till he obtained the bleſſing. Hence ſays the prophet, "By his ſtrength he had power with God; yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept and made ſupplication unto him; he found him in Bethel, and there he ſpake with us." And to this aſſiſtance is owing the victory of believers, however weak: "Ye have overcome the wicked one; for greater is HE that is in you, than he that is in the world," ſays one apoſtle, while another boaſts that he "can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth him."

Sixthly, The pleaſures of religion are *real*. All the honourable ſtations of life, which promiſe ſo much pleaſure while the proſpect is remote, that the moſt part of mankind aſpires after them, are full only of vexation and vanity. Let us appeal even to thoſe who ſeem moſt happy; and, if they let their experience ſpeak, they will

will confeſs it is ſo. Yea, let us hear what the wiſeſt king, and inſpired preacher Solomon ſays, as the fruit of repeated experience. He neither wanted riches to purchaſe, nor ſpared pains to poſſeſs himſelf of the delights of the children of men. His treaſures were immenſe, his buildings ſtately and magnificent, his plans noble, and well executed, his throne aſtoniſhing, and without its like in any land, his table ſumptuous, his attendance pompous, his retinue ſplendid, his armies numerous, his horſes and chariots many, and his ſhields and targets of beaten gold. Beſides this, he had gardens and orchards, where every flower bloomed, and every kind of fruit ripened, which perhaps came the neareſt to paradiſe of any thing planted ſince Adam was expelled the happy place, being beautified with the limpid pool, and cryſtal caſcade. Moreover, he had poſſeſſions of great and ſmall cattle, ſervants bought, and born in his houſe, men and women ſingers, and all the delights of the children of men, with (which pleaſes the ambitious breaſt) dominion over the kingdoms round about. All this he poſſeſſed for ſeveral years, and yet, O ſtrange! and yet the concluſion is, "All is vanity, and vexation of ſpirit!" But the pleaſures of religion are of another nature; they are,

1. Pure. One cannot be ſurfeited here; the ſaint may "rejoice in the Lord always, and again, he may rejoice, even rejoice evermore."

2. They are quieting and compoſing pleaſures. No ſtorm can greatly moleſt the ſoul in which they preſide. Hence ſays the Pſalmiſt, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul;" and, "Unleſs thy law had been my delight, I ſhould then have [illegible] mine affliction." Yea, in what a ſtate

ſtate of tumult and turmoil would the children of the kingdom walk continually, did not "the peace of God, that paſſes underſtanding, rule in their hearts?"

3. They are real, ſolid, and powerful pleaſures that are enjoyed in the ways of God. See the ſaints triumph in the midſt of danger! Stephen's face ſhone like the face, not of an innocent perſon, not of an acquitted pannel, not of a victorious conqueror, but of an angel! and that in a place, (the midſt of enemies), and at a time, (near death), when moſt people's faces gather blackneſs. How have ſome ſcorned the ſcaffold, and triumphed in the flames! for though ſin has more ſervants or ſlaves than religion, yet it has fewer martyrs. Indeed many have come to a fatal and untimely end by ſin, but none ever died to maintain that vice was virtue, or wickedneſs no crime. Nay, the moſt abandoned often appear penitent at death, but in all ages the dying ſaints have had moſt to ſay in commendation of religion, and left a teſtimony in honour of it.

Laſtly, The pleaſures of religion are permanent pleaſures. The things of the world which have ſtolen the name of pleaſure, though they were perfect in their kind, yet are paſſing, and of no continuance; hence it is, that ſo many, many diſappointments ariſe from things in which we expected the greateſt happineſs. But here, though "the morning" be but "ſpread on the top of the mountains," like the faineſt rays of the early dawn, yet it ſhall grow brighter and brighter ſtill, till it beam a "perfect day." "Believers may go forth weeping; but, ſeeing they carry precious ſeed, they ſhall come again rejoicing." Their joy, like Ezekiel's holy waters, the longer it runs, the wider and deeper it grows, "till it be a great river, even waters to ſwim in" for ever.

ever. Theſe pleaſures are often poured out moſt plentifully, as the believer is about to go into the other world, and, as it were, enlarge and expand his ſoul as he paſſes into the infinite ocean of pleaſure and delight. It is on this account that they who know what the "joy of believing" is, would not exchange it on any account with all the delights of the kings of the earth; for all created things are to them, as once to Paul, "but dung and loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus," in whom they find their heaven. The gracious ſoul finds a non-ſuch delight in the firm belief and full aſſurance, that all theſe pleaſures, and pleaſures more entrancing than theſe, ſhall continually pour from the throne of God and the Lamb, and rejoice and dilate the glorified ſoul.

Seventhly, There is a *reality* in the reſult or reward of religion; for as it fared with Iſrael of old, ſo ſhall it fare with all the children of hope, "not one good thing which the Lord has promiſed ſhall fail, all ſhall come to paſs." The men of the world account the expectants of glory the greateſt fools in being, to place all their hope in things ſo little known, and ſo far away; and, in view of this future world, to lead ſuch an auſtere life, and deny themſelves ſo many enjoyments, without which life would ſeem a burden. But they quite miſtake it; for religion carries its own reward in its boſom. Aſk thoſe that feel the power of it on their own ſouls, and they will confeſs, that though men were not concerned in the leaſt with futurity, yet a religious life as far excels the ways of ſin as light excelleth darkneſs, and is to be preferred before the pomp and ſplendour of the abandoned monarch; for therein is found a joy which the world knows not, nor can intermeddle with. When

the ſons of ſenſuality reap tribulation and anguiſh, then ſhall "the effect of righteouſneſs be quietneſs and aſſurance for ever;" then to the religious ſhall it be ſaid, "It ſhall be well with you;" for though they muſt not ſpeak of merit, yet they may plead the promiſe, and "God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love." Not a groan ſhall be forgotten, not a tear ſpilt on the ground, not a petition but is minuted in the records of Omniſcience, to be anſwered in its proper time, in this world, or in the grand accompliſhment of all their requeſts, when admitted to be for ever with the Lord. Religion will not, like our pleaſing dreams, and entertaining amuſements, fly away for ever, but ſhall be realized in all its divine beauties in the ſoul, when all the heavenly graces grow up to perfection, or riſe into an higher order. This ſacred ſpark ſhall blow into a flame, when the fires which men have kindled, and walked in the light of, ſhall go out, and they lie down in ſorrow. Thus we ſee there is a REALITY in religion, whether we look *up* to God, *in* to ourſelves, *round* to time, or *forward* to eternity.

II. In honour of religion we obſerve, that *ſpirituality* ſhines in it. It is converſant about ſublimer things than the ſubjects of philoſophy, or the ſtarry heavens. Alas! ſhould reaſonable creatures, dignified with immortal ſouls that ſhall exiſt for ever, conſume their precious moments on tranſitory pleaſures, which waſte away while we wiſh for them, flatter in the purſuit, beguile in the embrace, and pain in the poſſeſſion? But religion is pure, ſpiritual, excellent, and ornamental to all poſſeſſed of it, and here it is that the ſoul feels the blowing of the "north and ſouth-wind, that makes the ſpices of her garden to flow out."

First,

First, The objects of religion are spiritual: God and his perfections, Christ and his offices, the Holy Ghost and his operations, the heaven-born soul and the new creature, the spiritual life, and the Christian warfare. Carnal objects are cast off, while they "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." If the human understanding be pleasantly puzzled with some amazing phænomena of nature, as the attractive virtue of the loadstone, and the stimulating powers of electricity, why overlook the spiritual mystery, *God incarnate*, and the beauties of religion? In religion the soul looks above those things on which the world fixes almost, if not altogether, to adoration. Thus she sees splendour perish into an evening shadow, and glory into a midnight gloom; she pities the monarch, and deplores the great; treads on titles, and despises praise; and not only "endures," but triumphs, "as seeing Him who is invisible."

Secondly, The subject of religion is spiritual, to wit, the soul. It is the heart that is pricked in conviction, taken away, though hard and stony, in the new covenant, and filled with joy in believing. The Christian graces are spiritual. Faith and hope, and all the heavenly train, are of an enduring nature. Again, the exercises of religion are spiritual. Prayer and praise, and all the acts of adoration, are of a spiritual nature, suited to the divine object, who is a Spirit, and the Father of spirits. Moreover, the pleasures of religion are spiritual and sublime. The imaginary pleasures of sin, as they are for a season only, so they are confined to sense; but the joys that are found in the ways of God refresh the soul in her noblest powers. And, lastly, the rewards of

religion are ſpiritual; the crown is a crown of immortal life and immaterial glory; the inheritance in light reſerved for the ſaints, is undefiled, and cannot fade away. In a word, aſſimilation to, and the enjoyment of God, which are the ſum and ſubſtance of the bliſs above, are ſpiritual.

III. In commendation of religion, we obſerve, that it is truly honourable. All men are fond of honour, and every one counts it his honour to ſerve his prince, and the nearer his perſon, the greater his honour; how much more honourable, then, to ſerve that God whoſe ſervice is an honour even to kings? Hence ſee how the royal pſalmiſt glories in the deſignation, Pſal xxxvi. title, "A pſalm of David, the ſervant of the Lord:" not David the King of Iſrael. Yea, God himſelf is pleaſed to pronounce his own people honourable: "Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable;" and elſewhere, "Kings daughters were among thy honourable women." How is it, then, that religion is deemed ſo much beneath the notice of the great? and that profeſſors thereof are ſooner put to the bluſh, than the openly profane? But, whatever ſinners may think or ſay, certain it is, that religion is honourable in theſe reſpects,

1. It raiſes the happy perſons above the ordinary rank of mankind, not by *enriching* them, elſe all men would wiſh to be religious, but by *renewing* their natures. Hence their affections are elevated from things below, and ſet on things above. Their aims are more excellent than thoſe of others, even "that in all things God may be glorified:" Their views are more exalted, while they "look not at things that are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen:" Their knowledge is more refined,

while

while they "know Him who is the true God, and eternal life." In a word, their life outſhines the worldling's far, while they live on high, and have their "converſation in heaven." Thus religion renders them "the excellent ones of the earth," "precious as fine gold." In the parable, the ſaints are the wheat, which ſhall be gathered and preſerved, but the irreligious are the tares which ſhall be plucked up, bound in bundles, and burnt.

2. Religion aſſociates men with angels, while ſin claſſes them with devils. Hence the ſaints, in their glorious New-Teſtament privileges, are ſaid to be "come to an innumerable company of angels;" and the paſtors of the Aſiatic churches are called "Angels." But where religion has no place, how meanly are men for the moſt part taken up! One has his whole mind ſet on his extenſive trade; a newly purchaſed poſſeſſion engroſſes all the attention of another; a third muſt incloſe and cultivate his grounds; and a fourth has his hands, and head, and heart, ſo full of many things, that he has not a moment for the "one thing needful." Not that we are to neglect the neceſſary affairs of life, (religion teaches no ſuch thing); for as we are commanded fervency of ſpirit, ſo we are forbidden ſlothfulneſs in buſineſs; but when the things of time occupy the place which the law of God ſhould have; when they talk with us by the way, walk with us in the field, are laſt in our mind at night, and firſt in our thoughts in the morning, then are we chargeable with that love, wherewith "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." How noble are the attainments of ſome of the ſaints! for, in the exerciſes of true religion, in ſome reſpects, may the ſeraphs ſay, "Behold the man that is as one of us!" And ſurely when the ſoul is

taken up about eternal things, ſhe acts in an higher ſphere than kings, though they were dividing kingdoms among their ſubjects.

Men generally deſire to be wiſe, (though ſometimes, as Solomon confeſſes, it increaſes ſorrow), for "man honoured wanting knowledge, is like the beaſts that periſh." Now, here is wiſdom that can make the face to ſhine, even when the countenance is changed in the diſſolving pang. Indeed, religion pretends not to the wiſdom of this world, but ſoars above the utmoſt ſtretch of philoſophy itſelf. What avails it to name and number all the ſtars? what to ſpan the rolling ſpheres, and meaſure worlds on high? to tell the cauſe of thunder, and the flowing tides? what advantage would it bring, though one wiſer than any heretofore could unfold the union between ſoul and body, and explain how they mutually ſuffer and ſympathize? Notwithſtanding all theſe attainments, without "the wiſdom that is from above," the man muſt die a fool. Yea, theſe inſtructive diſcoveries will ſeem but as idle tales to the perſon who contemplates a crucified Saviour. This, though a ſtumbling-block to the Jews, and fooliſhneſs to the Greeks, yet affords to the believer the brighteſt diſplay of the power, wiſdom, love, and mercy of God. In his enlightened eyes, "God manifeſted in the fleſh," remains a permanent ſubject of ſurpriſe; "juſtified in the Spirit," as our Head and Repreſentative, an eternal tranſport of joy; "ſeen of angels" in our nature, an everlaſting aſtoniſhment; "preached unto the Gentiles," matter of grateful amazement; "believed on in the world," a wonder for ever freſh; "and received up into glory," as a triumphant conqueror, the ſpring of ecſtaſy and delight!

If

If men are fond of great friends, and noble connections, in religion they are only to be found. It is thus that they become brethren to the ſons of God, the morning ſtars; for the heavenly nations and militant throng make but one family, and are named of one Father, God. But in religion there is yet a more honourable relation; for,

3. As Chriſt is near a kin to his people, by taking part of fleſh and blood, on which account "he is not aſhamed to call them brethren;" ſo they are nearly related to him, for "he that is joined to the Lord, is one ſpirit." To this aſtoniſhing relation the hoſts above turn their wondering eyes, and, ſtooping down, deſire to look into it. However mean an appearance the heirs of bliſs may make in this world, yet, being the brethren of Chriſt, it may well be ſaid of them, as once to Gideon of his Father's family, "each one reſembles the children of a king;" and though the world deſpiſe them, ſtill they are the men that the King eternal delighteth to honour, and will honour in preſence of aſſembled worlds.

Again, all things in religion are honourable. Its Author, its effects, and its ends, are honourable. Its doctrines are ſacred, its maxims noble, and its privileges vaſt. The diſtance that is placed between the whole world and God, is removed here, ſo that his people "have boldneſs by the blood of Jeſus, to enter into the holieſt," have acceſs and nearneſs to his throne, "hide themſelves in the ſecret place of the Moſt High, and dwell under the ſhadow of the Almighty."

See what a buſtle is often made for a ſeat in Parliament! But muſt not the moſt ambitious *members* themſelves own, that a ſeat in the "general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born," is infinitely preferable; ſince,

1. The

1. The whole *house* is glorious paſt deſcription, angels in their robes of light, ſaints in their garments of glory. 2. Since there is no contention, no invective ſpeeches thrown out there, but all is heavenly concord, ſacred harmony, and mutual love. 3. Since the individuals need not fear death, nor the auguſt aſſembly a *diſſolution*, the members being immortal, and the *ſeſſion* eternal. And, 4. Since every member, by him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, has more noble royalty, and a more extenſive kingdom beſtowed on them, than all the kings on earth.

A king is known by his guards; what an honourable guard, then, have all the ſaints of God, ſince "the angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him!" Sure all the crowned heads in the world could never preſent ſuch a *body-guard* as a poor prophet of old had; "a mountain full of horſes and chariots of fire." And the meaneſt candidates for heaven have ſtill an intereſt in the ſame immortal and auguſt *life-guards*; for, "are they not all miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them that ſhall be heirs of ſalvation?"

Some noble perſonages, richly dreſſed, riding in ſuperb carriages, and with a ſplendid retinue, may draw attention as they drive along; but were the vile vipers that lodge within, inſatiable luſt, boundleſs ambition, deviliſh malice, &c. or the infernal fiends that follow them to puſh them on to every exceſs of wickedneſs, viſible to the admiring multitude, how would they ſcatter with ſcreaming and terror at the dreadful ſight!

To ſome this may appear a fanciful repreſentation; but we may be aſſured, that theſe angels of darkneſs are continually preſſing with temptations the ſlaves of ſin, though they may not know what a temptation means;

means; only we muſt not aſſign this retinue of demons to *nobility* alone, ſince Satan rules in the hearts of *all* the children of diſobedience of whatever ſtation; nor muſt we think that he never attacks nor tempts the ſaints of the Moſt High.

4. The great and glorious *object* of religion renders it honourable. Here ſcenes of glory open with ineffable beauty; God, in his exiſtence and nature, perſons, perfections, and attributes, decrees, and providences; and Chriſt in his incarnation and glory. Here, then, is all that the moſt enlarged deſire of mind can wiſh for.

IV. In honour of religion, we obſerve, that, as it acts and operates on the ſoul in all her powers and faculties, ſo it makes a noble change. In the wild and unbridled carcer of corrupt nature, every thing is anarchy and tumult. The underſtanding is clouded with ignorance, the will ſtiffened with the iron ſinew of perverſeneſs, the memory encumbered with toys, trifles, and affronts, the affections clogged with carnality and ſenſe, the conſcience ſleeping in the arms of unbelief, on the pillow of carnal ſecurity, and the whole mind embittered with enmity againſt God. But when religion takes place, an happy change enſues; then, in the underſtanding, light ſprings up in the place of darkneſs, even "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus;" the iron ſinew is broken, and the ſtubborn will is melted into the "obedience of faith." The memory is ſwept of the traſh of ſin, and ſtored with the "exceeding great and precious promiſes;" the affections are refined, and "ſet on the things above;" the "conſcience is ſprinkled with the blood of Jeſus," and purged, and ſo enabled rightly to diſcharge its proper office, to accuſe or acquit; and the whole

whole mind is repleniſhed with the love of God, in which, as in a garden, all the graces of the Spirit are ſown, and grow up to perfection. Yea, the very paſſions ſhare in the delightful change, both with reſpect to God and man.—1. With reſpect to God. Love, that was ſet on the things of time, and the enjoyments of ſenſe, now chiefly centers on God, and delights in ſpiritual things. Hatred, that once vented itſelf againſt every thing divine, is now manifeſted againſt ſin, and every appearance of evil. Their fear is no more of a man that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man that ſhall be made as graſs, but they ſanctify the Lord in their heart, and make him their fear and their dread. Their joy, which once aroſe from periſhing things, is now in the Lord, in the light of his countenance, and at the remembrance of his holineſs. The gold is no more their hope, nor the fine gold their confidence, but they truſt in the living God, who gives them richly all things to enjoy.—2. With reſpect to men. Where hatred raged, love reigns; where cruelty inflicted every pain, compaſſion pours in balm to the bleeding wound; where envy fretted, benevolence dwells; where revenge heated, forgiveneſs ſoothes; where emulation ſtruggled, ſelf-denial ſhines; and where avarice ſnatched, liberality pours.

V. The ſpotleſs innocency that ſhines in religion, as it muſt commend it, ſo it might allure the whole world to fall in love with it. When religion ſhall ſway her ſceptre over the world, every one ſhall ſit under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none make him afraid. Harmleſs as the dove in their deſigns, they are free of fraud and circumvention; and meek as the lamb, they ſuffer rather than ſin; as once a noble officer replied, when

when challenged to a duel, "You know I don't fear fighting, but I fear ſinning." In a word, religion makes men peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be intreated, mindful of favours, forgetful of injuries, merciful, and bountiful. Were the world peopled with real, not nominal ſaints, we ſhould need no more the bolted door, or darkened window; the walled court, and maſſy gate; the armed ſentry, and ſtrolling watch; but dwell ſecure in univerſal innocence. It is true, that men who ſeem religious, yea, who may be religious, do ſome things contradictory to ſo divine a character; but this is owing to their religion either being falſe or faint; for, wherever it has the dominion, every action will ſhine with innocence and truth. But that theſe are foul blots among profeſſors, no more deſtroys the propoſition, that innocency ſhines in religion, than Judas being among the apoſtles, invalidates the truth of the Chriſtian religion.

VI. The diſintereſtedneſs of religion may recommend it to all; for no gain is to be made of godlineſs here, though godlineſs with contentment be great gain. Saints muſt not think to riſe in the world by religion, or be exalted above others, but expect to be hated of the world, which loves only its own. Piety promiſes not the ſenſual man's pleaſures, though it yields the pureſt delights, and promiſes a paradiſe to come; for "all that will live godly, muſt ſuffer perſecution," of one kind or other, and often be the ſong of the drunkard, or the jeſt of the debauchee. The devout perſon is to lay his account with loſſes and croſſes in the ways of God; and when his moſt valuable property and deareſt relatives come in competition with religion, frankly to let them go. What amazing effects had the Chriſtian religion among the primitive converts! "they had all things common!"

common!" Though it deſtroys not civil property, as Peter told Ananias, "while it remained," that is, the land unſold, "was it not thine own? and after it was ſold, was it not in thine own power" to give or retain it? Yet thus the power of Chriſtianity ſo appeared, that many who ſhared in the common ſalvation, made their poſſeſſions a common good to the infant church.

VII. In honour of religion, we obſerve, that it has the precept and command of the Moſt High, "Be ye holy as I am holy;" and this precept all his reaſonable creatures ought to obey, and ſo endeavour to approach this divine excellency of his nature. It is both our duty and our privilege; our duty to ſtudy conformity to him, and our privilege that we may aſpire at being as he is! How may the angels be aſtoniſhed, that the ſons of men ſhould be aſhamed of that which is the glory of the higheſt heavens! The honour and happineſs of the immortal ſoul lies in its ſimilitude to the God of glory, beautified with which, the firſt man dropped from his Creator's hand, and ſhone like an angel in paradiſe, till ſin dragged him from his dignity, and drove him from the pleaſant ſpot. Now, this being only regained in religion, is it not, muſt it not, be honourable?

VIII. We have alſo the pattern and example of the bleſſed Jeſus, whoſe life was juſt one track of religion, "holy, harmleſs, ſeparate from ſinners." Now, if the actions of great men be worthy of our imitation, how much more of the God man? Hence ſays the apoſtle, "Imitate me, as I alſo imitate Chriſt," "who himſelf hath left us an example." Here, indeed, is an awful dilemma; we muſt either reſemble God or the devil. There is no middle ſtate betwixt nature and grace here, as there is no purgatory betwixt heaven and hell here-

hereafter

after. He that gathers not with Chriſt, ſcatters. Piety and profanity (though there be degrees in each) are the two claſſes which include the whole world.

IX. In honour of religion, we may obſerve a few of its *advantages;* ſome of which have already been named. Though the wicked think that there is neither pleaſure nor profit in religion, yet there is both the pureſt pleaſure, and moſt abundant profit; and their unfavourable opinion only holds true with reſpect to the empty trifles which they themſelves purſue. Indeed, the conduct of Providence ſometimes puts the ſaints to a non-pluſs what to think, or what to ſay. This was the caſe with godly Aſaph once, who thus confeſſes his folly and miſtake: "Truly, God is good to Iſrael, to ſuch as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almoſt gone; my ſteps had well nigh ſlipped." 'Such were the effects of my envy at the fooliſh, when I ſaw what I accounted proſperity attend the wicked. I concluded thus: Theſe are the happy ones, their death is free of bonds, and their ſtrength continueth firm; they know nothing of the afflictions of ſome, nor are acquainted with the troubles and diſtreſſes of others, yet are openly profane, and ſet their mouth againſt the very heavens that pour on them their plenty. In vain, then, have I purified my heart, to none effect waſhed mine hands in innocence; for I am chaſtened every morning, and afflicted all the day long. But if I talk in this manner, I ſhall ſtumble the generation of the upright, though to know this myſtery of Providence be too painful for me, till in the ſanctuary of God I ſee their miſerable end. Surely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places, whence thou tumbleſt them headlong into deſtruction. In an inſtant cometh their deſolation, and in a moment they are no

more, but are delivered up to be consumed with everlasting terrors. As when a man breaks his repose, the delusive dream departs; so, O Lord! when thou awakest to call the world to judgement, thou shalt despise their image; for then they are no more than a shadow, the substance of their primitive excellency being eaten out with the canker of sin. But now, with shame, I confess before thee my folly in quarrelling the conduct of Providence, and my brutish sensuality in envying the prosperity of the wicked; for when they are driven into darkness, I am for ever with thee.'

But let me name a few of those many advantages that abound in religion, first, to the world in general; then, to men in their several stations and relations; and, thirdly, to the happy individuals themselves, where religion takes place.

With respect to the *first*, Every man may be religious without hurting the constitution of kingdoms, or polity of nations. Every man cannot be a king, else subjects would cease, but kings and all men may be godly, without injury to any. The monarch loses not his sovereignty by becoming a subject to the King of kings; nor does the free-born subject barter his liberty by commencing a servant of the Lord Jesus, whose service is honourable. When the laws of heaven are trodden under foot, then boundless ambition, and thirst for dominion and fame, kindle the flames of war in the world; but when religion shall unite the nations, then shall the peaceful inhabitants beat their pointless spears into pruning knives, and their swords, blunted with slaughter, into ploughshares, and learn the art of war no more. In what security would the human tribes then dwell! and with what safety trade with one another! The craggy shores

should

ſhould not need to be rendered more awful by the mounted guns, and maritime troops; nor would there be occaſion for frontier garriſons, and walled towns. The happy monarch might walk abroad without his life-guards, nor fear the cruel aſſaſſin. Yea, in every land, did religion prevail more, private intereſt would be ſecure. The fraudulent dealer would ceaſe; forgeries never appear, and the extortioner be no more; the widow would not be devoured, nor the fatherleſs become a prey; deſigned bankruptcies would not be heard of, nor families ruined by deceit; the litigious law-proceſs would not commence, nor the falſe witneſs appear at the bar; domeſtic happineſs would not be interrupted, nor divorces ſo much as heard of in the land; the impartial judge would fill the bench, and equity dwell in the ſeats of juſtice; the thief would not mark the houſe, nor the robber infeſt the high-way; the evil ſpeaker would not be eſtabliſhed, and the detracting tongue would be huſhed in ſilence. Were the kings, called Chriſtian, more acquainted with true religion, the ſtrongeſt efforts to ſpread the knowledge of their common Lord among the heathen to the ends of the earth, would ſuperſede their ambitious ſtruggles to ſignalize their reign, and to aggrandize their throne, by iniquitous acquiſitions to their own dominions, or by robbing other kings.

But, *secondly*, Religion makes men advantageous to one another. Religion makes the king rule like a father, and ſubjects obey like ſons. It is religion that conſtitutes the worthy companion, and the boſom-friend; the diſintereſted ſtateſman, and the faithful counſellor; the equitable judge, and conſcientious dealer; the tender parent, and deſerving child; the indulgent huſ-

band, and the loving wife; the compaſſionate perſon, and the chearful giver; the careful paſtor, and obedient flock; the bold commander, and undaunted ſoldier; the truſty ſervant, and the honeſt man. We ſhall,

Thirdly, Name ſome of the advantages that the religious perſon is poſſeſſed of himſelf: 1*ſt*, In life; 2*dly*, In death; and, 3*dly*, In the world to come.

1*ſt*, In this life. And more generally, we may ſee, (1.) That religion is not attended with ſhame. The abandoned world may gaze at the ſaint as an oddity in his day, but ſtill his countenance is ſerene; nor can the ſtaring crowd, or whiſpering pair, trouble him. Paul of old was not aſhamed of the croſs, or the goſpel of Chriſt; and martyrs, in later times, were not aſhamed to go to the ſcaffold for their religion. While the abandoned wretch brings a black conſcience and a fallen countenance to a death-bed, the religious perſon quits the ſtage in triumph. (2.) Religion in the ſoul gives a man the trueſt courage, for "the wicked fleeth when no man purſueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion." Sin and guilt are always attended with more or leſs of fear. But how, then, are ſome wicked men ſo intrepid and brave? It is owing to their miſtaken notions of glory, and their never thinking calmly on a future ſtate *. Their courage is rather like the fury of a deſperado, than the magnanimity of a reaſonable creature. The religious man can not only march in the face of danger, but of diſgrace; while others, diſtracted with the apprehenſions

* I knew a gentleman, who would readily accept a challenge to a duel, but could not hear of death, or the torment of the damned, and, if inſiſted on, would run away from the company.

prehenſions of approaching poverty, break the laws of God and nature, and deſtroy themſelves; and thus entail upon themſelves a worſe diſgrace than that which they dreaded, and endeavoured to avoid. But while the wicked tumultuate like the reſtleſs ſea, religion calms all the paſſions, commands peace through the whole ſoul, ſheds tranquillity into every power of mind, and is "health to the navel, and ſtrength to the bones."

But, more particularly, religion is advantageous to men both in affliction and in proſperity.

1. In affliction; and to affliction all men are expoſed, in a greater or leſs degree. Pure tranquillity is too divine a bliſs to be enjoyed below, though the ſaint comes neareſt it, who finds his croſſes rendered lighter by contentment, and ill uſage leſs galling by meekneſs, and all his ſufferings more tolerable by patience.

(1.) Then, under the loſs of riches, religion points to the true riches; and in the deepeſt poverty, claims a treaſure in heaven, "where the moth cannot eat, nor the thieving gang break through and ſteal." Though the religious perſon's riches ſhould make themſelves "wings like eagles, and fly away," yet his ſoul has got the ſtart of them. His affections are refined, and ſet on things in heaven, and therefore he is not greatly moved, though the nobleſt things of time ſhould avail him no more. Mindful that he brought nothing into the world, and that he can carry nothing out of the world, he is happy, though poor in the world, "if rich in faith," and "an heir of the kingdom" to come.

(2.) Under the loſs, the undeſerved loſs, of our good name, religion teaches us to look to God, who has not eyes of fleſh, and therefore ſees not as man ſeeth. It calls in the teſtimony of a good conſcience, and, in ſpite

of envy, makes us compoſed within. In a word, it looks forward to that deciſive day, when cauſeleſs reproaches ſhall be wiped away, and the judgement of the juſt as brightly manifeſted as the cloudleſs noon. Thus the Chriſtian is exerciſed under ſlanders, while the ſinner is hard at work how to calumniate his calumniators, and repay reproaches with intereſt.

(3.) Under injuries, religion reaps the advantage, "brings forth meat out of the eater, and ſweetneſs out of the ſtrong;" looks to the over-ruling hand of God in permitting them, forgives the inſtrument, and keeps ſilence. But the wicked rage, intend revenge, burn with anger, and pine with envy.

(4.) When deſerted by the perfidious friend, religion leads to, and repoſes the ſoul in the faithfulneſs of God, who is "a friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother;" and is at hand when diſtreſſes preſs hardeſt.

(5.) When relations, the deſire of our eyes, the hope of our future life, or the comfort of our hoary hairs, are removed by death, religion ſupports under the ſtroke, and ſilences under the loſs, by preſenting to the view the unſeen world, where "all live unto God;" by a lively faith of the reſurrection, when our mouldering friends ſhall riſe immortal; by a wiſe conſideration of the brevity of our own life, that ſhortens while we ſorrow, and ends before we have finiſhed our lamentation; and by a full and hearty acquieſcence in the conduct of the great Ruler of heaven and earth, who "does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Though the deceaſe of relatives, of all common afflictions, gives the deepeſt wound, yet the joys of religion have ſo abounded, at that melancholy ſeaſon, in the ſouls of ſome, that they have behaved with a ſerenity of mind that aſtoniſhed ſpectators,

ſpectators, while they diſplayed a joy as if they rather had found a kingdom than loſt a friend.

(6.) Under the moſt general calamities that can befal a people or nation, as peſtilence, famine, or ſword, religion only has the promiſe of ſecurity, ſupport, and ſafety; and, relying on the all-ſufficient God, is undaunted in the midſt of danger, while carnal minds, overcome with fear, ſink into deſpondency and death.

(7.) Under baniſhment, religion renders our exile pleaſant, ſpreads the beauties of our native country on the foreign plain, makes diſtance ſeem home, and the barren deſart ſmile. How, indeed, can the child of grace be baniſhed, who, wherever he goes, finds his friends, his heaven, and his God? Or, how can he ſit alone, though all his acquaintance are removed into darkneſs, who may have "fellowſhip with the Father, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt?"

(8.) Under diſappointments of every kind, religion gives tranquillity of mind, which is a bleſſing the worldling cannot boaſt of. Are purpoſes broken, enterpriſes abortive, hope deferred, till the heart is ſick? Well, religion ſupports and comforts under all.

(9.) Under bodily diſeaſes, to which all are ſubject, religion keeps the head above the waters, ſo that, though the "outward man periſh, the inward man is renewed day by day." Supported by the proſpect of an happy immortality, the glad expectant triumphs in ſpite of the weakly ſtate of his earthly tabernacle. Though ſome loathſome diſeaſe fills his bones, yet he rejoices in view of that day, when "his vile body ſhall be faſhioned like unto Chriſt's glorious body." Yea, ſhould the melancholy diſorder make inroads on his mind, and render him an object of the deepeſt pity, yet, in the lucid intervals,

tervals, religion points to, and partakes of, that eternal calm, when ſtorms and tempeſts ſhall diſturb no more.

(10.) Under ſome family or perſonal afflictions, that may be of ſuch a nature, that it would be imprudent to reveal them, or to complain of them to our neareſt friends, religion pours in balm to the bleeding wound; and, by an univerſal acquieſcence in the divine conduct, ſupports us under every touch of his rod, every trial of our graces, and opens our eye towards that happy world, where, when we arrive, we ſhall forget all our afflictions as the waters that flow away.

(11.) There is another, and a non-ſuch affliction, which of all others muſt pierce the tender relations to the very heart, and that is, to ſee our friends, the neareſt and deareſt, running in the way to hell, and "going down to the chambers of death." Yet, here religion calms the ſtruggling paſſions, and pours in comfort to the bleeding heart, by repreſenting the *ſovereignty* and *riches* of grace, that reaches and reclaims the worſt and moſt abandoned ſinners, and that at all periods of life, by laying open the everlaſting covenant, which ſecures all their own ſalvation, ſatisfies all their deſires, and ſupports all their hopes, "though their houſe be not ſo with God;" and by giving views of that approaching ſtate of bliſs, which, as fleſh and blood cannot inherit, ſo the endearing ties founded thereon ſhall ſubſiſt no more, but a new and noble relation wholly take place, ſpringing from union to the Lamb; and then ſhall we know no more ſorrow, feel no more pain on account of our damned relations, than we do now for the fallen angels. But theſe views are only to lighten our burden, not leſſen our concern, or prevent

our

our prayers, that our Iſhmaels, our dear *outcaſts*, may live before God.

2. In proſperity, religion is no leſs advantageous than in adverſity. As in *this*, it preſerves from being cruſhed and broken by preſſures from without, ſo in *that*, it defends from being burſt by ſwelling pride within, for man is naturally weak in body and in mind. It gives a juſt eſtimate of all created things in their moſt pompous appearance, and ſhews that they are, 1. *Finite*, and therefore not a *ſufficient* portion for the immortal ſoul. And, 2. *Uncertain*, and therefore not a *ſure* portion for the ſoul. And, 3. *Dangerous*, and therefore not a *ſafe* portion for the precious ſoul. The Chriſtian, therefore, like Solomon of old, inſcribes on the moſt excellent things of time, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Indeed, affluence and proſperity is juſtly accounted the more dangerous condition of the two for the ſons of men, as it is a continual dew on the ſeeds of corruption, whereby they ſpring and grow very faſt. Hence it is that not many mighty, not many noble, chuſe religion. Yea, by a wicked abuſe of wealth, it becomes next to impoſſible for rich men to enter into the kingdom of heaven: For, though riches, when uſed to glorify God, when they bring the grateful poſſeſſors to the bountiful Giver, when expended to charitable uſes, and when the ſuperabundance of the opulent ſupplies the wants of the indigent, ought to be accounted, as they really are, a bleſſing: Yet, when they get between the ſoul and God, when Mammon ſets up in oppoſition to Heaven, and when the creature demands to be worſhipped more than the Creator, "who is God over all, bleſſed for ever," then they become a curſe, and a grievous one too.

Abraham,

Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, were religious under their growing plenty. David and Solomon builded the temple out of their immenſe treaſures. And as Jehoſhaphat was *exalted* in proſperity, ſo "his heart was *lifted* up in the ways of the Lord." Theſe were ſingular and happy conſequences of proſperity, for the far greater part of mankind, like Jeſhurun, when they wax fat through worldly eaſe, kick at religion, grow unmindful of the Rock of their ſalvation, and forget God that formed them. But religion is a divine preſervative from all the dangers that attend tranquil proſperity, and more particularly,

1. In the midſt of flowing plenty, and accumulated ſums, the wiſdom that is from above ſees the uncertainty of ſuch eagle-winged treaſures. What a fool would that man be, that ſhould expend his whole poſſeſſion to purchaſe an eagle that had alighted in an adjacent field, then be proud of his acquiſition, and build thereon for futurity, when the bird might remove in a moment, and be ſeen no more! Juſt ſuch a fool is he that lays out time, ſtrength, and talents, applies with hand, heart, and affection, to obtain riches, which make themſelves wings, and fly away toward heaven; that is, which waſte we know not how, and are gone, we know not where. While the carnal mind fixes on the outward glory, religion enables a perſon to ſee the real vanity of riches. Conſcious, therefore, that they cannot calm a troubled conſcience, or heal a wounded ſpirit, that they cannot recommend him to God, and that the ſhining gold but paves the ſtreets, and the ſparkling gems but found the walls of the heavenly city, he keeps them in their proper place; and more eſteems and values the true riches, the hidden treaſure, than all the wealth of time. More-

over,

over, he opens that hand that Providence has filled, and makes the widow's heart to ſing for joy, and the poor to bleſs their benefactor. And that influence which he has in the world, he uſes againſt vice, and for virtue. His bounty, however univerſal, ſtill diſtinguiſhes itſelf towards the houſehold of faith; and, in his charity, he gives proof that he has a better inheritance than that which brings him in a few thouſands a-year, and is intereſted in more immenſe treaſures than can be comprehended by figures or numbers. Again, as in the heavieſt afflictions, religion ſupports from ſinking into deſpair, ſo, in the plenitude of all terrene things, it ſuppreſſes pride, and fixes the eye on his original clay, that had no diſtinguiſhing excellence above the meaneſt of mankind. Though narrow ſpirits compute their merit by their incomes, and the greatneſs of their ſouls by the extent of their eſtates, yet the divinely illuminated perſon dares not weigh himſelf in ſuch a falſe balance, leſt, when weighed at another day, and in a truer ſcale, he be found wanting.

2. When his fellow-creatures commend and trumpet his praiſe, religion preſerves him from ſelf-eſteem. It admoniſhes him to build nothing on the applauſe of a fickle populace, of whoſe inconſtancy the greateſt of men, in all ages, have been melancholy inſtances, but none more ſo than the Lord of glory, who was ſurrounded with hoſannas in his triumphant entry into Jeruſalem, by thoſe very tongues that a few days after belched out, "Away with him! crucify him!" He that looks into his own heart, or up to heaven, prefers the approbation of God and conſcience, before the moſt elaborate panegyrics of flattering tongues.

3. In the midſt of friendſhip and favour, religion teaches

teaches the uncertainty of all things. It preſents the inſpired admonition, "Truſt not in a friend;" ſeeing that often "a man's enemies are the men of his own houſe," and that he that will give good counſel to his friend to-day, as *Ahithophel* to David, will to-morrow ſummon all his wit and policy to deſtroy him, as the ſame ſtateſman dealt with the ſame ſovereign. Again, as the good man dares not truſt in his friends, ſo he will not boaſt of them, however great; for often "thoſe that are highly eſteemed among men are an abomination in the ſight of God." On the one hand, while he views the friendſhip of the world to be (as Egypt proved of old) a broken reed, which, inſtead of ſupporting, pierces the hand that leans thereon to the very quick; ſo, on the other hand, he eſteems the favour and friendſhip of Heaven a rock of defence, an impenetrable ſhield, and coat of mail, that defends him on every ſide; and, being conſcious of his ſafety, he bids defiance to his moſt inveterate foes, that, with appalling noiſe and angry clamour, vex him every day.

4. Amidſt a flouriſhing family, and numerous relations, religion inſtructs him to hold a looſe *gripe* of them, ſeeing death has ſuch a faſt *gripe*, that he will never quit his hold till they are laid in the ſilent duſt; and to prize more a *ſonſhip* in his family, who is Lord of heaven and earth, than to flouriſh in every inferior relation.

5. Though the man dwell in his own tabernacle, and ſeem to dig about him, and take deep root, ſtill religion reminds him, "that this is not his reſt;" that he is a ſtranger, though he fill a throne, and a pilgrim, though he dwell in a palace; and, therefore, that he ſhould attend to his journey, and mind his latter end.

6. In

6. In health of body, and quiet of mind, the expectant of glory looks for days of darkneſs, days of affliction, and the awful day of death. Religion prevents its ſubjects from ſquandering away *too much* two of its moſt ineſtimable bleſſings, *time* and *health*, at vain amuſements or idle recreations. He that values as he ought endleſs eternity, will alſo prize highly a few years, days, or hours, in which he may prepare for it, and which, when paſſing, cannot be protracted, nor recalled when paſt. Therefore he lives as one that believes he muſt die, and improves health as one that expects ſickneſs, ſo that when ſickneſs and death attack him, he is neither ſurpriſed at, nor unprovided for, the laſt onſet of the *king of terrors*.

7. Religion gives the ſanctified uſe of the creature. The Chriſtian enjoys the creature, but rejoices in God only. "He eats, and giveth God thanks; he ſacrificeth not to his own *drag*, nor burns incenſe to his own net," but in and through all his endeavours, owns the divine bleſſing for the ſucceſs that attends his undertakings. He makes not the good things of this life a bed to loll upon, nor ſays to his ſoul, in the ſtyle of infidelity, "Soul, eat, drink, and take thy reſt, for thou haſt goods laid up for many years," but makes them (as the traveller does the king's highway that is kept in good repair) expedite him in his journey heavenward, while the ſons of diſtreſs paddle through a dirty, broken road. If the hours of light are not all expended in his daily employment, he is exerciſed more or leſs in ſome religious duty, and imitates the pſalmiſt in his extra-devotions, (if I may ſo call them), in approaching the throne of grace at *noon*, as well as morning and evening. But, though his whole time allotted for the work

of every day, be conſumed on his daily work, yet neither hurry nor confuſion, crowds nor confinement, can hinder, beſides his ſtated devotion, the mental ejaculations of the pious ſoul. Moreover, if his yearly income exceeds his annual expence, beſides his charitable diſburſements, his library will ſhine with ſome of the beſt authors on divine ſubjects, to entertain his ſpare hours, and feaſt his nobler powers. Thus he ſucks ſpiritual bleſſings out of worldly bleſſings, which, to thoſe that miſimprove them, " are curſed, and become a trap and a ſnare."

8. Religion gives contentment in a *low*, a *middle*, or an *exalted* ſtation; for otherwiſe, vain aſpiring mortals never arrive at ſuch a height of grandeur, riches, or bliſs, as to ſay, " Hitherto am I come, and I would wiſh no more, I would go no farther."

It is ſurpriſing, that reaſonable creatures, who can perceive the diſproportion that takes place in duration, in numbers, in quantity, who can ſee the diſproportion between an hour and an age, between one and a thouſand, and between a mole-hill and a mountain, cannot ſee the difference between things temporal and eternal, between the pleaſures of ſin and the torments of hell, between earthly grandeur and heavenly glory, and between the afflictions of time and the joys of eternity. Though a man could loll on the lap of felicity through a life longer than Methuſelah's, what is that to the untold ages of eternity?

I call my readers to pauſe a little here. Let us ſuppoſe, that all the inhabitants of Great Britain, as ſubjects of his Britannic Majeſty, were given to underſtand, that, at one period or other, every individual would be tried in ſome court of juſtice, and that ſuch as had honoured

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their King, obeyed the acts of Parliament, paid the taxes, esteemed his ministers, and repelled his foes, should, at an appointed time, without fail, be carried to court, be ranked among the ancient nobles, cloathed in the finest robes, ride in the most superb carriages, in company with all the grandees at court, and always eat at the King's own table, where every guest should obtain the whole desire of his heart; but, on the other hand, that such as had despised their sovereign, rebelled against his lawful authority, disobeyed the acts of Parliament, paid no taxes, lampooned his ministers of state, and associated with his foes, should be imprisoned in a loathsome dungeon, amidst the basest of malefactors, brought from all parts of the kingdom, fed on bread and water, and scourged once a-day, and that as long as they drew the breath of life. Now, to drop the simile, a reality of awful magnitude presents itself. Let us lift our eye from loyal and disloyal subjects, to saints and sinners. Though the king's palace could not accommodate all the loyal subjects of Great Britain, yet the palace of the King of glory can receive all the saints of every age, where they shall be associated with the angels of light, cloathed in robes of glory, and endued with qualities that will bring greater honour and happiness, than riding in chariots of massy gold, to wit, made spiritual and immortal, and so able to fly from place to place like the angels. They sit at the king's table, drink of the rivers of pleasures that flow at his right hand, and hold uninterrupted communion with God. Where is the subject, whose breast would not beat with joy, in prospect of being ennobled, and admitted to dwell with the king in the palace-royal all the days of his life, in unruffled felicity?

And ſhould not every human heart much more rejoice in view of being made perfect in holineſs, poſſeſſed of heavenly glory, and admitted into the preſence of the Prince of the kings of the earth? Is not this an honour as much above the honour of earthly courts, as the heavens are higher than the earth? Hence, ſee how honourable religion is, eſpecially if we conſider the other ſide of the ſimile, and on one or other ſide muſt all mankind ſtand. The moſt loathſome and horrid dungeon in the univerſe bears no proportion to the bottomleſs pit, the lake that burns with fire and brimſtone, where confinement is, indeed, the ſecond death. The worſt of malefactors can never compare with ſinners in the height of enmity, and extremity of anguiſh; for all the foul fiends, the legions of Apollyon, are there, with whom to be connected is diſgrace to the uttermoſt, and to be in their ſociety is torment intolerable, yet there ſhall every ſinner be confined for ever; and moreover, they ſhall be tormented, not once a-day, but every hour of the day, every minute of the hour, and every moment of the minute, in every part of their body, in every faculty of their ſoul, even in their whole man, for ever and ever!

Again, in honour of religion, we obſerve ſome of its excellent privileges, and ſhall only name them. Saints have God to be their God, and this comprehends all bleſſings; for though the wicked have a god, yet it is their belly, whoſe end is deſtruction. They have a Father, whoſe pity to his children is divine, whoſe bowels are bowels of compaſſion; who hears their cries, and will in ſeaſon ſupply all their wants. They have a brother, whoſe kindneſs,—a guide, whoſe conduct,—a captain, whoſe courage,—a leader, whoſe care,—a guard, whoſe

whose vigilance,—a prophet, whose knowledge,—an high priest, whose sympathy,—a table, whose plenitude,—a physician, whose skill,—a judge, whose equity,—a friend, whose faithfulness,—an intercessor, whose earnestness,—an advocate, whose eloquence,—a king, whose government,—and an husband, whose love,—have been the support, and are now the song, of myriads round the throne. Further, are they on the field of battle? Then they may take to themselves the whole armour of God.—Must they engage the foe? Then he is strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.—Are they travellers through a weary wilderness? Then he is their sun, whose beams direct their way, and at last enlighten their passage through the dark valley of death.—Do their souls faint for thirst and hunger on the fatiguing road, and under the sultry heat? Then he is a *stream* that follows them all the way, at which they may daily drink, and banish all their pain.—What clusters of promises also appertain to them, and of such a rich variety, as to suit every saint in every situation they can be in!

2*dly*, In honour of religion, we shall view its advantages at death. Now, though religion should expose us to all kinds of miseries through our whole life, yet its kind offices in the hour of dissolution might balance all; but how doubly excellent must it be, since it is the *joy* of life, and the *staff* in death; not in the Popish sense, for the royal mourner was no Roman Catholic, though he could plead, "Remember, O Lord! how I have walked before thee in truth and uprightness." The gay things of a vain world may amuse thoughtless fools, through all the jovial hours of health, and hinder everlasting concerns, and a future state, from that reception which belongs to them in every human breast. But,

when laid on a death-bed, the ſcene changes; the flowery joys, fine amuſements, and faſhionable recreations, diſappear, like the hungry man's table in his dream, while his whole ſky blackens with clouds and tempeſts of wrath, and all the terrors of eternity arrange themſelves awful in his face, ſo that the poor ſoul is diſtracted with the ſenſe of growing anguiſh, convulſive horror, and conſummate deſpair. Fain would he have all to be a dream, a fiction, a fable; but the dreadful truth, with irreſiſtible evidence and additional force, returns on him, till his heart-ſtrings break, and then he plunges into torments and terrors, which infinitely exceed his wideſt apprehenſions, and his vaſteſt fears.

This is the portion of all them that know not God; and though, for wiſe ends, few of the wicked make this diſmal exit in the eyes of the world, yet the fire that is not quenched ſhall encircle them for ever; and the difference is not great, whether a malefactor, that is condemned to be burnt, be awake, and roaring out, while the executioner is tumbling him into the fire, or in a profound ſleep, when caſt into the furnace, ſo that his firſt yells ſhall be among the flames.

1. Then, as to the time of death, the ſaint dies full of days, and ſatisfied with years, whether he die at forty or at fourſcore. All the ſons of religion are like David's royal line, raiſed to a crown, whether at childiſh eight, tender twelve, or blooming twenty-five: And though the generation may ſuffer loſs, and their relations feel ſorrow, yet the glories of their future ſtate overbalance all that in the eyes of mortals may look like diſappointment or pain. In two young trees that grow in the ſame nurſery, ſee the fate of the juſt and unjuſt. One is taken up to be planted in a better ſoil,

and

and under the continual care of the husbandman; but the other is rooted out, to be cut to pieces, and cast into the fire.

2. As to the place where we die, religion removes every disagreeable prospect from the expectant of glory. Hence the deserts of Arabia, the scorching sands of Africa, or the wilds of America, may be as agreeable to him as to die at his own home, in his native country, amidst the tears, and in the arms of his dearest friends; because he is under the divine tutelage of Him in whom the affectionate endearments of the tenderest relations are summed up, and infinitely exceeded. Dying in God, he dies at home, though he depart this life in the most distant part of the world.

3. As to the manner of his death, like Josiah, he dies in peace, though mortally wounded, amidst all the tumult and terror of the day of battle. It is not in the power of earth or hell to hinder the saint, whatever way he dies, from falling asleep in the Lord. Fire and water do him friendly offices, even when apparently executing judgement on him. The rapid current that may deprive him of life, only conveys him to the rivers of life, and streams of pleasure, that are at God's right-hand for evermore; and the devouring flame that may reduce his body to ashes, like Elijah's fiery chariot, carries his immortal part to the happy realms of everlasting day.

Matters may hang long in suspense among the unthinking world, not purely from principle, but from prejudice, and the power of corruption; but this solemn hour brings a sudden decision, not only at the tribunal of God, but at the bar of conscience. The dying person sees things in quite a different light now from what he did before. What would the expiring *rake* give to

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have his nocturnal revels recalled, and the ſcenes of darkneſs buried in everlaſting darkneſs from the eye of God, and of his own conſcience! What a poor appearance will the gaming-table have in the eye of that perſon who is now about to throw his laſt dye for eternity! What he accounted once the *enjoyment* of life, is now the anguiſh of his ſoul, and the terror of his eternity; and he finds, that to *kill an hour*, was to ſtab his own ſoul. How would he wiſh his ſoul in his ſoul's ſtead, whom, becauſe *wise unto sobriety*, he accounted unſocial and moroſe! Yea, thouſands of the gay world will find that the mirth of a *ball*, the brilliancy of an *assembly*, the amuſements of a *masquerade*, and the entertainments of the *theatre*, afford but poor reflections on a death-bed. But religion is now the beſt of bleſſings, and comforts againſt grief on every ſide; and though our friends, who may have been many, and our acquaintance, who may have been vaſt, in this melancholy ſeaſon, may dwindle into a dear friend or two, a careful ſervant, and a kind phyſician, yet how is the loſs repaid, while the comforts of the holy Ghoſt, the joys of heaven, the bright proſpect of approaching glory, and foretaſtes of the bliſs above, are beſtowed!

Let all that are now aſhamed of religion, who would rather appear in a play-houſe, than in the *house of prayer;* rather read a romance than a religious treatiſe; retire any where but into their own breaſts; are at ſo great a loſs between the laws of the land on one hand, for the laws of Heaven are out of ſight, and their lawleſs depravity on the other, how to ſpend the Sabbath, that if it were not for coffee-houſes, country-jaunts, gardens, parks, and meadows to walk in, evening viſits, and newſpapers, they would almoſt petition Parliament that

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it ſhould "not be joined to the days of the year, nor come into the number of the months:" I ſay, let every ſuch perſon conſider, if it will be any honour or pleaſure to lie groaning and dying under the anguiſh of growing deſpair; to have the heavens revealing his iniquity, by making conſcience roar out a bitter lamentation over, and confeſſion of his abandoned life; to have his mouldering tabernacle diſlodging his affrighted ſoul, that knows not where to fly, or where to find a friend; to have grinning furies waiting at his trembling bed, to ſnatch his flitting ghoſt to everlaſting flames; to have hell gaping for him beneath, and heaven above bolting out his diſembodied ſoul; in fine, to have God, in all his adorable perfections, in all his divine attributes, through an endleſs eternity, pouring in the fury of his wrath, the rage of his incenſed omnipotence, into every power and faculty of ſoul. How wilt thou endure this, O man! who art a worm! O ſon of man! who art but a worm! "Sin is a diſgrace to any nation," ſaid the wiſeſt of kings on earth; and the ſad experience of the nations of the unconverted in hell, will echo *amen* to it for ever. Where is the king that would abdicate his crown to become a beggar? Where is the beggar that would deſert his ſpecies to become a beaſt? Yet, every where the men may be ſeen that caſt off their God, forego their glory, throw away their bliſsful immortality, and barter their heaven, to become beaſts, ſinners, devils? And what have they in exchange for ſuch a tremendous loſs? Verily, nothing; for the ſaint is allowed the very ſame enjoyment of the very ſame pleaſures that the ſinner can boaſt of, only under ſome rules and reſtrictions, which render the enjoyment a greater bleſſing; which golden rules, ſome unhappy creatures

tranſgreſſing

tranſgreſſing through exceſs, ſuddenly deprive themſelves of theſe ſenſual enjoyments they delight in; are cut off in the flower of their life, and hurried headlong into hell!

At this momentous period, religion keeps the head above the waters when the world avails no more. The crown that has often made the royal head ſick with cares, brings no comfort in his laſt ſickneſs. The *Coronet*, the *Star*, and *Garter*, that dignified them all their days, can do nothing for the noble perſonages, now when about to be no more. Wide dominions, vaſt incomes, numerous friends, high-ſounding titles, and univerſal fame, can neither abate one pang in their laſt illneſs, nor brighten the dark proſpect of future worlds to dying mortals.

The poſſeſſion of nothing preſent, the remembrance of nothing paſt, (however gay, and grand, and agreeable once to carnal minds), that is not ſpiritual and divine, can ſupport the ſpirit of thoſe that are juſt ſtepping into the world of ſpirits.

How ſurpriſing to ſee ſome that have ſpent their life in one round of mirth and gaiety, without one ſerious reflection for a courſe of years, ſo ſad at death, ſo extremely ſad, that every ſympathiſing ſpectator is alſo made ſad! ſo drenched in rueful tears, that the eyes of all preſent bear a part in the mourning *!

"Though the afflictions of the righteous be many, yet "their latter end (and the latter end determines the

* On the day that this was tranſcribed, an acquaintance of the author's was buried, who cried out, in his laſt illneſs, "O death, death! Death is nothing, if damnation were not at the back! Hell is begun within! In a little I ſhall be in the loweſt pit."—See Monthly Memorial, June 20. 1769.

the ſtate) is peace." But however ſplendid and tranquil the life of the wicked may have been, their latter end "ſhall be cut off for ever." Suppoſe a vain great man walking in his own garden, admiring, like the King of the Chaldees, his ſtately buildings; and, in the mean time, that a ſwift whirlwind, ſhould ſweep him away in a moment, from all his poſſeſſions, friends, and acquaintance, and, in a ſtraight line, with winged ſpeed, and irreſiſtible force, waft him over all the tracks of land and ſea that lay under ſuch a line, yea, through unmeaſured heavens, and beyond unknown ſtars, till loſt in the dark regions of unenlightened ſpace, yet ſtill puſhed forward by the tremendous whirl, till apprehenſion fails, and thought can follow him no more: Such, and infinitely more wretched is the ſtate of the wicked at death, who are *driven from light into darkness, and are chaſed out of the world;* chaſed with the ſtorm of God's wrath, and affrighted with the tempeſt of his ire, into the extremity of anguiſh, the uttermoſt of deſpair, and *forward* through an endleſs eternity of torment!

But to make a ſhort digreſſion here. Beſides arguments, we ſhall bring witneſſes from both worlds to prove that religion is honourable; and theſe witneſſes ſhall be both men and angels, friends and enemies. We ſhall call in the adverſaries firſt, and that at a time when all men are ſuppoſed to ſpeak truth, to wit, on a death-bed. What is the language, then, of ſuch ſevere remorſe, ſuch wiſtful looks, ſuch anxious uncertainty, ſuch cutting reflections on his now almoſt finiſhed life, ſuch lamentations over his miſpent time, ſuch awful forebodings of futurity, ſuch ſadneſs of countenance, ſuch dejection of ſpirit, and ſuch horrors of conſcience? Why, whether the perſon ſpeak or not, yet his caſe ſays,

"Wiſdom

"Wiſdom (and the fear of the Lord is the chiefeſt wiſdom) is the principal thing; therefore get wiſdom, and with all thy getting, get underſtanding." Though the thirſty ſoul ſhould not call for water, yet his panting for it tells how refreſhful it is, and how inſupportable the want thereof; and though the blind man ſhould not deplore his loſs, yet his ſtumbling againſt every ſtone, and tumbling into every ditch, proclaims how pleaſant it is to ſee the light, and how miſerable the man is that cannot behold the ſun. Juſt ſo, the terrors of the dying deſperado, the ſorrows of expiring ſinners, and the *silence* and *insensibility* of graceleſs immortals, when going into the inviſible world, aloud proclaim the excellency of religion, which diſſipates the terrors, ſcatters the ſorrows, and burſts the ſilence of impenitence and unbelief, into the triumph of faith, the joy of believing, and ſongs of aſſurance. But what numbers on their death-bed have their eyes opened to ſee, and their tongue looſed to deplore, the deſperate folly of their irreligious life. Hence many die, if not ſound converts, yet ſorrowful penitents; and while hell flaſhes in their face, they change their opinion of the pleaſures of ſin, which for a ſeaſon beguiled them, but eternally deſtroy them. How melting their lamentations, while they bewail their miſpent time, their graceleſs companions, their abandoned life, and their ruined ſoul! No orator can talk more pathetically, can perſuade more powerfully, can deſcribe more exactly, the folly of ſin, than the dying perſon againſt whom "the terrors of God ſet themſelves in array," and through whoſe eyeballs the horrors of hell may be beheld, while that fatal death-bed repentance, the ruin of many ſouls, that have truſted their ſalvation to ſuch a ſhadow, is converted into anguiſh and deſpair!

In the next place, let us hear the ſame witneſſes in the world of diſembodied ſpirits. If dying men are ſuppoſed to ſpeak their mind, and to tell the truth, ſurely naked ſouls, departed ſpirits, who have bid an eternal adieu to all the world, and have not the leaſt connection with created things, muſt be allowed to ſpeak inconteſtibly true. Now, though the enmity of the hopeleſs ſinner, and the malice of the damned rebel, may be arrived at ſuch a pitch in this ſtate of conſummate woe, that they will neither commend religion, nor deplore (ſtrictly ſpeaking) their loſs of ſalvation, any more than a madman will either commend the exerciſe of reaſon, or bewail his being deprived thereof; yet his frantic deeds and wild expreſſions, his furious rage, his chains, his cloſe confinement and auſtere attendants, give a noble encomium on the exerciſe of reaſon before the whole world; juſt ſo, what is the language of their inſupportable anguiſh, their horrid blaſphemies, their diſfigured countenance, their kindling eyes, their awakened conſcience, their extreme torment, their everlaſting chains, their amazing confuſion, their growing horror, their ineffable diſquietude, their convulſive tremblings, their terrible howlings, unceaſing ſcreamings, chilling lamentations, unpitied complaints, helpleſs, hopeleſs condition, and their diſtracting proſpect of a vaſt eternity, where all theſe nameleſs miſeries, like the waters of an unbounded ocean, ſhall ſurround, and ſwell over their wretched heads for ever,—I ſay, what is the echo, the dialect, the language, of all this accumulated agony and infinite woe, but a loud lamentation over the loſs of God, of glory, of bliſs; and an high encomium on religion, where God "meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteouſneſs?"

Let us, in the next place, call in all the legions of fallen angels to atteſt this truth, "That holineſs is both the ornament and the happineſs of every rational, intelligent being." Though the midnight-darkneſs can ſay nothing, can reveal nothing, yet it commends the beauty of the noon-day ſun, whoſe golden beams and benign influences, ſhed on the various parts of creation, make them reciprocally ſmile on one another, and both *cauſe* and *heighten* our enjoyment of ſublunary things. Even ſo, though the rooted enmity, inveterate malice, and rivetted envy of Satan, and the whole herd of apoſtate ſpirits, would rather lie howling in the bottom of hell, avowing their rebellion, than, by falling ſubmiſſive at the Almighty's throne, ſhare the bliſs of angels, and the joys of heaven, though offered; yet the darkneſs of their ſtate, their tempting others into the ſame tranſgreſſion and torment, their eternal jarring and combuſtion among themſelves, their believing and trembling, their exquiſite ſenſe of Jehovah's wrath, their terror for the judgement to come, and their reſtleſs excurſions through the univerſe, ſhew that *ſin is hell*, *kindles hell*, and *casts into hell*. If religion were not honourable, why is this ſtate of ſin and wrath, which is the direct oppoſite, ſo intolerable to mighty ſpirits? Why were the foul fiends ſo afraid of our incarnate God, but becauſe they are debarred for ever from the preſence of his glory, (and in holineſs he is glorious), and condemned to dens of horror through eternal night? Why doth Lucifer, the fallen ſon of the morning, and many of the morning ſtars, who once ſang together, now mourn together over their remedileſs ruin, but becauſe they have loſt (for without a ſenſe of loſs there can be no pain) his preſence, where is fulneſs of joy, and are driven from his right-hand, where

where pleaſures flowed, and flow for evermore? How mighty muſt the pangs be, that pierce the very hearts of fallen archangels, the *powers* of the darkneſs of the nether world! What an heaven muſt be in holineſs, in conformity to God, in piety, in religion, ſince the loſs thereof degrades the brighteſt angels, the once happy heirs of bliſs, into the blackeſt devils, into the moſt agonized ſpectres! Thus we ſee, that the moſt ſtubborn ſinners, the ſtouteſt opponents of religion, in life, at death, and in the world of ſpirits, with or againſt their will, *muſt* bear record to the truth and excellency of religion. Yea, it is true, though ſtrange, that the keen purſuer of created enjoyments, of ſenſual pleaſures, in every vehement deſire, in every eager wiſh, in every freſh purſuit, commends, mightily commends that *thing*, (and that is nothing elſe than religion), which ſatiſfies every deſire, prevents every wiſh, crowns every purſuit with ſucceſs, and ſatiates the whole ſoul with ſolid joy, and ſubſtantial delight.

Two witneſſes ſtand in law; but here are two claſſes. In the one claſs are millions of men, in the other legions of devils; and ſo clear, ſo confirmed are they in the truth they atteſt, that they will never change their teſtimony, no, not through an eternity of torment. But as they have given, as it were, a negative proof, (than which, though nothing can be ſtronger), yet we ſhall alſo adduce two bright clouds of witneſſes with their poſitive proof; and ſurely, when *negative* and *poſitive* proofs meet; when in life and at death the *votes* harmonize; when earth, heaven, and hell *agree;* when men, angels, and devils *ſay* the ſame thing, the whole world muſt give their *aſſent*, as I, as thou, O reader! as every reaſonable

creature ſhall in a little commence a witneſs for the ſame truth (whatever ſide we be on) in the world to come.

We ſhall again begin with men, but with men in communion with angels, with the ſaints of the Moſt High, the heirs of heaven, the expectants of glory. The ſatisfaction they find in religion, the joy they find in God, at all ſeaſons, under all trials, and in all diſtreſſes, cries aloud, *It is divine*. Not the pleaſures of ſenſe, nor the poſſeſſion of created things, can pour in a joy equal to that found in practical religion, in the light of his countenance. His preſence in his ordinances is ſo dear to them, that they would rather be porters at the door of his houſe, and ſit on the humble threſhold, in that lowly poſture, to hear the joyful ſound, than live ſplendidly in tents of wickedneſs. It is in the paths of righteouſneſs that their hearts are filled with joy and peace, a peace that paſſes underſtanding. Hence that pious rapture of the Pſalmiſt, "Give to whom thou wilt their portion in this preſent life, fill their houſes with riches, their belly with thy hidden treaſures; but as for me, (and I am well content, and ſeek no more), let me behold thy face in righteouſneſs, and be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs, when I awake in the general reſurrection." Not only does their whole life bear witneſs, that "wiſdom's ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace;" but at the awful hour of diſſolution, in the face of judgement and eternity, their ſilent joy ſometimes breaks out into a ſweet ſong, as in Jacob, Moſes, David, Paul, and others. The men of the world often call religion deluſion, and piety enthuſiaſm; but no deluſion can ſtand its ground like this, "when heart and

fleſh

flesh begin to fail." Though, in some parts of the East Indies, some of the blinded heathen starve themselves to death in the excess of their idolatry, or hang suspended on an iron hook in great anguish, till the soul forsakes its emaciated body; yet, this being contrary to the *law* and *light* of nature, as well as revelation, only shews that the service of Satan is cruelty in the extreme; and that the wages of sin is death, sometimes here, always hereafter. But the joys, the hopes, and grounds of confidence, that cheer the dying saint, will stand the *search* of reason, the *trial* of conscience, the *scrutiny* of revelation, and the *attacks* of hell. What, then, is the language of such loud encomiums on godliness, such sweet reflections, such triumphant looks, such comfortable assurance, such refreshful prelibations of future glory, such brightness of countenance, such exultation of spirit, such rapturous songs, such a ready farewell to all that is near and dear in a world, (no small attainment this), such longings to be dissolved, and to be with Jesus, and such a flow of spiritual joy streaming through the whole soul, and that at a time when the shattered body lies pierced with pain, "and the multitude of the bones with strong pain,"—I say, must not the language of all this be, to commend religion, remove all objections, and wipe off every trifling aspersion cast thereon? Moreover, what cordial exhortations, what divine advices, what spiritual encouragements, and heavenly consolations, have dropped from dying saints to their surviving friends! And though it may be objected, that many esteemed saints have gone out of the world rather in despondency and darkness, with fear in their minds, sorrow in their countenance, and tears in their eyes, than in this triumphant

aſſurance; yet even this rather confirms than overthrows the aſſertion, *That religion is commended by all at the hour of death.* For their tears and entreaties, their petitions and prayers, their groans and ſighs, their longings and deſires at their laſt moments, muſt be for ſomething of the greateſt moment; not for kingdoms and crowns, not for riches and renown, but for ſomething more noble and divine; and that is, that God's countenance, which in ſovereignty he hides, may ſhine on them, and that the joys of religion, which are in ſovereignty with-held, on them may be beſtowed.

Again, the ſaints may change their ſtate, but never will drop their teſtimony to religion. Its excellency, therefore, is further confirmed by all the ſongs of the redeemed from among men, by their ineffable ecſtaſies, their heavenly hallelujahs, their pleaſant countenance, their eyes ſparkling with eternal joy, their tranquil conſcience, their endleſs happineſs, their everlaſting liberty, their amazing compoſure, their growing glory, their ſweet recumbency on the love of God, their eternal triumphs, their bleſſed and heavenly ſtate, their free acceſs to, and uninterrupted communion with God, and their delightful, entrancing, tranſporting proſpect of a vaſt eternity, where all theſe nameleſs joys, unknown bliſs, and ſacred pleaſures, like the cloudleſs beams of the noon-day ſun, ſhall ſurround, dilate, enlighten, and tranſport their raviſhed ſouls for ever. To us who *ſow* for a future world, religion is the only *ſeed* which produces ſuch a noble harveſt, ſuch a notable increaſe; for while he that "ſows to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption, he that ſows to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting."

In

In the next place, if we aſk the angels of light their opinion of the divine life, all with one voice will ſhout, that it is worthy of the warmeſt reception in every reaſonable breaſt. To be holy, to be like God, ſhines with unrivalled luſtre in the eyes of brighteſt ſeraphs, whoſe pleaſant ſong dwells on the adorable perfection, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hoſts, the whole earth is full of his glory." What is the language of the bliſs of angels, their ſtanding in the preſence of God, their promptitude to perform whatever he commands, their ſhining with beams almoſt divine, their chearful miniſtrations to the heirs of ſalvation, their undiſturbed harmony among themſelves, and that ſupreme joy they find in God, but an everlaſting encomium on the ſervice of the King of kings?

Now, let us return from this digreſſion to the advantages of religion at death. So bright are the views, ſo vaſt the expectations, ſo heavenly the joys, that are ſometimes the privilege of the dying ſaint, that he marches on with courage to meet "the king of terrors;" and cries, like the triumphant apoſtle, "O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And though ſome happy ſouls may have clouds and darkneſs to grapple with, yet their ſtate is as ſecure, though their circumſtances be not ſo joyful as the others. He that walks under the care of a ſkilful guide, ſhall not miſtake his way, though there be not light enough to let him ſee every ſtep he takes; ſo here, Jeſus is to his members, both "feet to the lame, and eyes to the blind," ſo that they all have an happy exit, a ſuperficial view of which made the noted necromancer of old cry out, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his!"

Religion

Religion and irreligion make this day widely to differ. The ſaint is delivered from all evil, reſcued from all his enemies, raiſed to his higheſt expectations, and crowned with immortality and bliſs. But the poor ſinner is dragged from all his enjoyments, ſtripped of all his honourable employments, ſeparated from all his friends, cruſhed in all his expectations, depreſſed deeper than his profoundeſt fears, and curſed with immortal miſery and woe. Confiding in the power and faithfulneſs that protected him all his days, the dying ſaint commits his fatherleſs children to the ſame God; and requeſts, recommends, and obteſts his widow to truſt in the ſame Rock; while the departing ſinner has nothing but curſes and retributions to entail, and a bad character to bequeath to his deſpiſed poſterity! The conſciouſneſs of a well-ſpent life, and the teſtimony of a good conſcience, at this ſolemn period, is preferable to the applauſe of multitudes, and the admiration of our fellow-creatures. Though neither riches nor glory can go down with us into the ſilent grave, yet whatever ſtation the candidate for heaven holds in the world, death is gain to him; for if he is poor, then "from the dunghill he is lifted up, ſet with princes, and made to inherit the throne of glory." Or, though carried away from a commodious houſe and fine eſtate, yet it is to an "heavenly inheritance, that fadeth not away." If death diveſts him of ſome honorary office, or tumbles the diadem from his royal temples, that are dignified with grace, ſtill the loſs is infinitely repaid, by the King eternal, with a crown of life, of righteouſneſs, of glory. And well may the greateſt ſovereign on earth, with chearful alacrity,

leave

leave the moſt flouriſhing kingdom in the world for the kingdom of heaven. But every thing is the melancholy reverſe with the wicked, like the wondrous cloud of retire from the moſt ſplendid palace to paradiſe, and old, that ſhed noon on Iſrael, but involved the Egyptians in midnight darkneſs. The moſt miſerable ſituation of the houſeleſs, homeleſs, friendleſs mendicant, is paradiſe in compariſon of that place of torment that ſhall receive the graceleſs beggar. Nor indeed will it mitigate his miſery, that, like Dives of old, he left a fair eſtate, fine houſe, and fat table, to be tormented in the gulph of horror. What will it advantage the royal temples, debaſed with ſin, that a crown lately adorned them, when encircled with flames? If diſſolution puts the heaven-born ſoul and his friends far apart, it is to uſher them into "the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born," where the ſweet endearments of heavenly friendſhip riſe above all that can be thought on below, and where, in a little, he ſhall receive all his Chriſtian friends for ever. But death ends the endearments, tears aſunder the ties, and finiſhes the friendſhip of the wicked, ſo that carnal relations, that have lived in the ſweeteſt amity among themſelves, and they that have been the moſt ſocial aſſociates in ſin, ſhall have the envy of hell, and the rage of deſpair, kindling and inflaming their breaſts againſt one another. O ſad condition! at war with God, with devils, with one another, and each with his own ſelf, without *parley*, without *pity*, without *profit*, and without *period!* Sin, to the believer, is the greateſt evil, and from this death delivers him, therefore death does the kindeſt office to him; but as it deprives the wicked of life, (and while there is life there is hope),

hope), and ſhuts them up in hell and wrath, to him it is the greateſt curſe. Finally, the angels that waited on the heirs of ſalvation from their cradle to their death-bed, are ready to waft away their diſembodied ſouls to bliſs; and in the very moment of diſſolution, their faith changes into viſion, and the glories of the inviſible world blaze around them; which brings us to,

Thirdly, The advantages of religion with reſpect to the heavenly ſtate, or the glories of the world to come. But we muſt not omit that remarkable period of the general judgement, when immortal honours ſhall be beſtowed on all the followers of the Lamb. To Jeſus, in this tremendous day, ſhall every knee bow, and every tongue confeſs, who, like the Old-Teſtament *Jesus*, or *Joshua*, ſhall make his ſaints put their feet on the necks of kings, trample on the old dragon, on the principalities and powers of darkneſs. What grandeur, what glory, what brightneſs of majeſty ſhall ſhine round them, and what joy and exultation ſhall ſwell within them, when, in the ſight of wicked men that mocked and reviled them, that perſecuted with ſword or tongues, and ſlew them in perſon or character; in the ſight of Satan and all his angels of darkneſs, that watched for their halting, that tempted them to ſin, and then accuſed them to God and their own conſcience, that ſhowered his fiery darts upon them through the whole courſe of their life; in the ſight of one another (for all the ſaints of God will be gathered together, from Adam to his youngeſt ſon) in whom the ſame ſufferings were finiſhed; and in the ſight of all the angels of light, who rejoiced at their converſion, and were chearful miniſters to them to the very gates of glory, they ſhall be *acquitted* by the *Judge Supreme*,

preme, exalted to his right-hand, and made *assessors* with him in the judgement! Nations shall see, and be astonished; generations shall behold, and wonder; the wicked shall fret, and pine away; the devils shall gnash their teeth, and depart into darkness. Not the grandeur of a coronation-day, not the nuptials of a prince, not the triumph of a Roman conqueror, not the glory of an earthly monarch, though kings were his subjects, and all nations owned his dominion, bears the least proportion to this divine *renown*; and yet *this honour is to all his saints*, who shall reign with him for ever.

We shall now name, and only name, a few things that constitute the state of blis; but what that is, what tongue can tell, what heart conceive? Stripped of mortality and sin, they share in the joys of paradise, mingle in the harmony of the higher house, and worship at his throne for ever. They see his face, they shine in his beauty, they sing of his love, they walk in his light, they rejoice in his highness, and feast on his glories. Strengthened by Omnipotence, they rest not day nor night, and yet their labour refreshes, and their exercise delights them. With sceptres in their hands, and crowns on their heads, they are seated on thrones of super-eminent glory. Verdant bowers and beds of roses, white horses and shining garments, crystal walks and walls of jasper, streets of gold and gates of pearl, are all but figurative descriptions of their ineffable blis; for something above *comparison*, above *conception*, constitutes the felicity of the highest heaven. Fashioned like the glorious body of our incarnate God, they shine as the brightness of the firmament, as the stars, and as the sun,

in

in the kingdom of their Father. They aſſociate with angels, and converſe with the armies of light. They feel no pain, they know no ſorrow, they fear no evil, they ſuffer no ſickneſs, they ſuſtain no want, in this exuberance of all good, but are kings and prieſts to God, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Jehovah and the Lamb is their temple, Jehovah and the Lamb is their light, and Jehovah and the Lamb is their ſun. Seeing his face in righteouſneſs, they are ſatisfied with his likeneſs, repleniſhed with his fulneſs, and beautified with his ſalvation. Above the attacks of pain, the reach of ſickneſs, and the ſtroke of death, they live a life of immortality and joy before the throne for ever. They hunger no more, they thirſt no more, they complain no more, neither ſhall the ſun nor heat beat on them any more; neither clouds nor ſtorms, tempeſts nor troubles, haraſs them any more. Not a wiſh but is fulfilled, not a requeſt but is granted, not a deſire but is accompliſhed, not a longing but is ſatisfied, not a power of ſoul but is repleniſhed. They drink at the rivers of his pleaſures, bathe in the fountain of life, and eat of the hidden manna, through endleſs day. Their happineſs exceeds their expectations, tranſcends their wideſt thought, and overwhelms with ſacred ecſtaſy all their raviſhed powers. Overwhelmed with wonder, ſearching his nature, adoring his perfections, and admiring his love, they are allowed the neareſt approaches, and moſt intimate communion with God *in* and *through* his Son, which continues their happineſs, confirms their felicity, and ſwells their bliſs above deſcription and thought!

But if the heavenly ſtate be ineffably divine, and ſtrike us ſilent, ſurely the ſtate of *woe* muſt alſo be in-

expreſſibly deplorable, and may terrify us into a mute amazement; for how miſerable muſt our poor fellow-creatures be in that mournful day, when they are baniſhed far from God, and forbid to look heaven-ward! Filled with inſupportable anguiſh, and the keeneſt ſenſe of the Almighty's wrath, they roar, they rage, they ſcream, they howl, they blaſpheme and curſe, they roll, they toſs, they tumble, and writhe, ſtretch and recoil, and fling and daſh themſelves, hither and thither, among the burning flames! Every thing about them is dark and gloomy; their perſon is hell, their companions devils, and their confinement *for ever*. Hope is fled, and the vultures of deſpair have fixed their iron talons in their heart-ſtrings, and gnaw thereon for ever. Their unquenchable thirſt has nothing to allay it but melted ſtreams of brimſtone and fire. If they look heaven-ward, there dwells their inexorable, their Almighty foe. If they look inward, there ſtings their awakened conſcience; if around them, there the murmurings, the heart-melting murmurs of diſconſolate ghoſts, ſound far and loud on every hand, like repeated peals of thunder, while the whole ſky opens in lightning and fire. Nor can their deplorable caſe excite pity. God "caſts upon them, and doth not ſpare;" yea, they are every one their own unwearied tormentors; and, as is the caſe with ſome madmen, their fury and fierceneſs againſt one another, riſes in proportion to their former affinity and friendſhip. Hence there is the moſt cruel diſcord, mutual reproaches, bitter altercation, and endleſs wrangling, which of itſelf makes a kind of hell, between friend and friend, parents and children, huſband and wife, who cordially attended others in the way to death; yet this

piece of misery cannot be avoided; for they are "bound in bundles" to be tormented together. How terrible to think, that the once nearest and dearest friends and relations shall have neither sympathy nor feeling for one another, but rather insult over others in their utmost anguish, in their extremest torment!

Again, the whole herd of bellowing fiends, and blaspheming spectres, with all the rage of desperation, and uproar of hell, *rush* upon one another in eternal battle; and beguiled, ruined sons of Adam, suffer all the insults, reproaches, torments, that the unnumbered legions of devils, now eternally unchained, can inflict. A world of gold (esteem not gold too much) cannot buy a drop of cold water to cool the tip of one tormented tongue. They are all diseased, but have no physician; sick, but no cordial; complaining, but no comforter; and in want of all things, but no supply of any thing. Though they have been *lawless*, and without God in their life; yet neither men nor devils are above God or his law, no, not in the lowest hell. Hence, on account of sin, they are tormented, and in their torments they sin more and more, which, as far as possible in a state of consummate woe, adds to their torment; thus *sin* and *torment* reciprocally heighten one another through an endless eternity.

Nor is it possible, while sin is sin, and God is holy, just, and true, that their state can alter, their natures mend, or their torments end. Therefore, to dream of some future, though far distant, period of punishment, when all things shall be restored to their pristine excellency, is to dream that the day is coming, when God will

will drop his divinity, and become ſuch an one as ſinners; is to ſay, that Chriſt died in vain. If rebels, by being confined a few days in priſon, or ſcourged round the priſon-court once, could be re-inſtated in their ſovereign's favour, it were ſtrange in the king to expoſe the *prince-royal*, his only ſon, the delight of his ſoul, and heir-apparent of his crown, to all the ſufferings he could well ſuſtain, to lie in priſon, and be ſcourged round the walls, under a ſenſe of his father's diſpleaſure, only to procure their enlargement a few days ſooner, or ſuſpend the laſhes from their rebellious backs. The application is eaſy.

But to go on,—and where can we go? Storms and tempeſts, flaſhes of lightning, and claps of thunder; hurricanes, that tear up mountains by their bottoms, and earthquakes, that ſhake the foundations of the earth, bear no proportion to the ſtorm of God's wrath. To run the gauntlet round the globe, till the nations were fatigued with inflicting puniſhment; to be alternately chained to the frozen pole, and flung into the boſom of the noon-day ſun; to dwell with the devouring lion, dreadful dragon, or hiſſing ſerpent, were a kind of paradiſe compared to hell. There are no diſtinctions below; the king and prince, the politician and patriot, are no more known; only the great ſinner is the great ſufferer; and where greatneſs or riches emboldened to ſin, it alſo embitters the puniſhment.

Now, though we have only touched at ſome things briefly in honour of religion, yet how excellent muſt it be, if we conſider its *Author*, its ends, its pleaſures, its rewards, its *Object*, its ſubjects, its advantages to the whole world, to one another, to our ownſelves, and that

in all ſtations, relations, circumſtances, and occurrences, in life, at death, in the day of judgement, and in the world to come. To dwell on high, to taſte the joys of the inviſible world, to conquer the world, to love enemies, to forgive injuries, to have their converſation in heaven, to walk by faith, to endure as ſeeing Him who is inviſible, to be like the angels of God, to be like God himſelf, to be under the guardianſhip of the heavenly hoſts, and the conduct of the Holy Spirit, to have all things working for good, whether adverſe or proſperous, to die under the ſmiles of God, to be brought into the King's palace with joyful hoſannas, to be crowned with glory, ſeated on a throne, and allowed communion and nearneſs to a three-one God for ever, is the higheſt preferment, the greateſt glory, and nobleſt attainment of immortal ſouls; all which is *only* found in *religion*. May we not, then, conclude, that all they that hate it, love death, darkneſs, damnation, and hell?

Here I had ended; but a thought or two occurs, to which I earneſtly importune the ſerious attention of my readers.

Paſſing a great number of motives which might be advanced to gain us over to the approbation and practice of religion, I ſhall only name two, both of which every man will find interwoven with his very conſtitution.

conſtitution. The firſt is, a deſire to be immortal, or to eſcape death. This, then, in the moſt unequivocal ſenſe of the word, is to be found in religion; for, ſays our Saviour, John, vi. 50. 51. "If any man eat of this bread, he ſhall live for ever." Now, what would kings, princes, and great men give for a terreſtrial immortality, if I may ſo call it, or to continue always on this earth, though it is not worth a wiſh in compariſon of the immortality of bliſs? As for that diſſolution that befals the ſaints in common with other men, it cannot be called death, becauſe it is unſtinged, and is bound up with the other bleſſings of the covenant, which belong to them alone: 1 Cor. iii. 21. 22. "All things are yours, or life, or death." The heirs of glory would not live always on earth; but, with the apoſtle, would "deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better." Even life itſelf to the very aged proves an intolerable burden; but to live for ever in the heavenly ſtate, is an immortality that ſuits every rational ſoul, and is promiſed to all the fearers of God. Then, you that are afraid to die, or are fond of long life, (and I know that there are many of my fellow-creatures of this deſcription), be religious in good earneſt, and you ſhall be ſatisfied with long life, and triumph at laſt over the king of terrors.

The ſecond motive I mention is, that in religion the moſt endearing ſociality and cordial friendſhip prevail; but in ſin every thing is awfully reverſed, for the huſband and wife, whoſe whole life has been one continued expreſſion of kindneſs, a mutual ſtruggle to make each other happy, but wholly without the fear of God, ſhall, after death, live in eternal jarring, bitter altercation,

horrid diſcord, and infernal wranglings, all former endearments being fully and for ever gone.

Ye indulgent huſbands and loving wives, whoſe hearts now glow with the pureſt affection and lively eſteem of one another, how can you think on that day when the dove ſhall become a vulture, the lamb a lion, or a tyger; when a fury, no where known but in the regions of abſolute deſpair, ſhall ſupplant each tender paſſion, ſhall flaſh from every eye, and make you wage and maintain a moſt horrid war between yourſelves for ever!

Parents, who have been the ſupport and honour of their children, and children who have been the delight of their parents, ſhall commence mutual foes and cruel tormentors of one another, in the regions of horror for ever. Brothers, who would have defended the life of each other, from the bloody aſſaſſin, at the riſk of their own, ſhall turn hard-hearted ruffians againſt one another, and heighten their ſufferings without remorſe or regret. Yea, thoſe friends, who were dear to one another as their own ſouls, who often met to ſpend the evening together, and often heard the midnight bell over the ſparkling bowl, and could hardly be parted when the morning aroſe; how melancholy to think, that they, in the future ſtate, forgetting all their former friendſhip, ſhall turn out the moſt inveterate and irreconcileable foes, and, with bitter upbraidings, and cutting altercation, charge their ruin on each other for ever!

What an accumulated woe, what a ſeven times heated hell await the companions of vice and debauchery! and that as certainly as they are forwarned of miſery on this friendly page!

Will

Will a few minutes diſcord with a near friend, ſo put you into diſorder, that you cannot eat your food, or take your reſt, but have, for your conſtant attendants, an aching head, and a ſad heart, and no peace of mind, till peace is reſtored between your friend and you? Think, then, what you muſt feel, where you *must be at variance* with your deareſt friends, and where *reconciliation is impoſſible!*

SOME

SOME THOUGHTS

ON THE

ETERNAL ENJOYMENT

OF GOD.

SOME THOUGHTS

ON THE

ETERNAL ENJOYMENT OF GOD.

Nov. 3. 1780.—The eternal enjoyment of God is a ſubject ſo boundleſs, ſo divine, ſo vaſt, that I know not how to begin, or what to ſay. But as I am now far advanced in life, and know not the day of my death; and as I believe that all the ſaints ſhall enjoy God, world without end, I will now and then, while I remain in the body, glance towards that ſtate of glory.

If a day in his courts on earth, to a pious ſoul, be better than a thouſand ſpent in the pleaſures of ſenſe, O what muſt a thouſand years in heaven be! and what muſt eternal ages of communion with God be!

Nov. 11.—I chide my carnality, and condemn my earthly-mindedneſs, and would fain take a peep at the perfect ſtate; but cares and concerns always obſtruct my view, and call my attention aſide; and I am often ſo buſied about the affairs of time, that I am apt to forget eternity itſelf.

There is a growth in grace below; and in glory above, a progreſſion in bliſs, and an increaſe of felicity, the

the proſpect of which muſt raviſh all the expectants of heaven.

Nov. 30.—It would be a ſhame for me to lament any misfortune below, who expect ſuch a felicity above. Faith's view of the heavenly bliſs ſhould make me chearful in my whole paſſage through this vale of miſery. The more miſeries that befal me, I have the fewer before me; but however many bleſſings, like the dew-drops of the morning, diſtil upon me, I have ſtill the fulneſs of the divine favour before me, which, like an ocean that cannot be exhauſted, will always be full and overflowing.

Dec. 10.—O happy day, when I ſhall enter on the heavenly ſtate, when I ſhall be brought with great gladneſs, and ſongs on every ſide, into the palace of the King eternal, there to abide for ever!

Jan. 13. 1781.—Since I entered on the ſtage of time, fifty annual ſuns have rolled over my head, and ſo I may expect the ſun ſoon to ſet on me; and let him ſet, for he ſhall only diſappear like a ſtar at the approach of a much brighter Sun.

April 15.—Though our old religious connections ſhall be there, yet in heaven the connection ſhall be new. The godly huſband and wife ſhall be there, yet in that ſtate they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God; that is, have no ties to one another, but in their common Lord, their common glory and bliſs, and their common employment; ſo ſhall it be with parents and children, miniſters and people, maſters and ſervants, princes and ſubjects. Yet as the wicked ſhall be bound in bundles, to burn more fiercely together, ſo, who can tell, but in the general aſſembly, on the heavenly mount Zion,

ſhall aſſociate, the pious parents and children, the religious huſband and wife, the faithful miniſter, and his crown of converts, and the godly author, and all that have been benefited by his heavenly writings, to the end of time?

June 12.—God, as to his eſſence, is as much preſent on earth as in heaven; but he does not manifeſt his preſence in the ſame manner. That his inviſible Godhead is every where preſent, is clearly ſeen, by the viſible things that he has made; and his omnipreſence, his ubiquity, is a proof of his eternity; for in the eternal ſtate, when I have travelled (with reverence be it ſpoken), through the regions of Deity millions of ages, I am ſtill in the centre of God.

June 16.—How trifling, then, a large eſtate, a kingdom, an empire, the univerſe, compared to my divine portion, the infinite God, in all his divine fulneſs, and adorable perfections! I am ſo far already entered on the enjoyment of God, that I ſmile at the men who are puffed up, and pleaſed with their earthly poſſeſſions, and am well ſatisfied with bread and water, while travelling through the wilderneſs to the heavenly country. But O! what ſhall the uninterrupted and eternal enjoyment of God be! Prepare my ſoul for this approaching bliſs, by repleniſhing every mental power with the graces of thy Holy Spirit.

July 7.—What a noble proſpect ſhall open to the ſaint beyond death! The ſoul, made perfect in holineſs, ſhall immediately paſs into glory, and lift up her eye on all the wonders of eternity. How inſufferable the effulgence, how divine the blaze, of unveiled divinity above! God dwelling in mine own nature; God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, dwelling in me, and making

his eternal abode with me, ſhall ſwell me with delight, and overwhelm me with ecſtaſy! The excellencies of the whole creation die like a glow-worm before the beauties of eternal noon; and, to one at my time of life, this ſweet proſpect (if I am indeed a ſaint) cannot be far diſtant. It is not much worth my while to live for all that is to be ſeen and enjoyed below, except to glorify God; but it is richly worth my while to die to ſee God; to depart from friends, however near, however dear, to be with Jeſus.

Sept. 29.—It is the eternal enjoyment of God that makes ſtraight what ſeems crooked, and numbers what appears wanting here. The death, the early, the untimely death, of the deareſt friends, is only bringing them to God, and to glory; and though ſurviving friends may ſeverely feel the ſtroke, and bitterly lament the loſs, yet it is the anſwer of all their prayers, the ſum of their deſires, and the crowning of their higheſt expectations.

Nor muſt the child of a ſpan long, that never ſaw the light, be accounted as corn blaſted before it be grown; for as God is the firſt cauſe, ſo he is the laſt end of all; and the child being deſigned immediately for eternity, it had no buſineſs with friends, or in time. Beſides, four weeks exiſtence in the womb, after the ſoul is put into the body, and fourſcore years crawling on the face of the footſtool, bear no diſproportion in the eternal world. Yea, is not that ſoul happy, that, juſt from its Creator's hand, is called to join in the praiſes of redeeming love, and into the eternal enjoyment of God!

Oct. 14. 1781.—A firm faith of the eternal enjoyment of God ſupports under all preſſures, and ſweetens the bitterest afflictions; for the ſufferer is mortal, and his ſorrows

ſorrows are but for a time; but his future bliſs is both unbounded and eternal. Yeſterday, with all the grief and feelings of an affectionate huſband, I buried a beloved wife, as I had a ſtill-born child three weeks before; this day, with the joy of a Chriſtian, I glance towards the land of glory, where I know my wife is arrived, and where I hope ſhortly to arrive myſelf. Now, if I had no proſpect beyond the grave, in what a gloom muſt I be, both with reſpect to my friend, already dead, and myſelf that muſt ſhortly die!

Nov. 4.—O what a daſh has the ſoul got by ſin! hence my delight in things that cannot profit; hence my averſeneſs to meditate on heavenly things; hence the carnality of my affections, and my contentment without communion with God. But when I enter on the enjoyment of God, every faculty ſhall be enlarged, every power renewed, and my ſoul ſhall go out on God with the vigour of angels, and the ardour of ſeraphims. Many a time have I ſat down to ſay ſomething of this triumphant ſtate, and had nothing to ſay; ſo true is it, that "ear hath not heard, eye hath not ſeen, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for thoſe that love him." What an infinite bliſs muſt it be that is prepared by an infinite God, whoſe bare word created heaven and earth, and all their glorious contents! When I enter on the heavenly ſtate, (and this earthly tabernacle I muſt ſhortly quit), I ſhall caſt round mine eye, and find myſelf in a world of wonders, in an eternity of tranſport and delight. O! thrice happy they, who are already arrived there! Why, then, lament the death of religious friends? And happy every one that ſhall ever arrive there! It is bliſs enough to enter the royal palace, to

ſtand in the King's preſence. Happy are theſe thy ſervants, thy ſaints, O Thou greater than Solomon! who ſtand continually in thy preſence, and hear thy wiſdom, and ſee thy glory, and ſing thy praiſe! I am like one in a low valley, wandering in a thick fog; I know that thoſe that are on the high mountain are above the fogs, and ſee the ſun in his beauty, and the heavens in their brightneſs; but ſtill darkneſs ſurrounds me, and things around me appear to be what they are not, while diſtant objects are not ſeen to be what they really are. But when I am called up to the mountain, I ſhall alſo ſee the Sun in his majeſty, and all heaven enlightened by his beams.

If ever I arrive at heaven, (and where will I enjoy thee but there? for to be without thee *through eternity*, is a thought that would fill me with terror and diſtraction), I think I ſhall find myſelf ſurpriſed that I could dwell with ſuch complacency ſo long on the footſtool, and never crying in good earneſt, "Come, Lord Jeſus!" I have no quarrel at my affiictions, they are ſent to looſe my affections from the things of time; O that they may not miſs their errand. If I only wiſhed to live to ſerve God in my generation, it were well; but if I wiſh to live for living's ſake, to purſue the things of time, and enjoy the pleaſures of ſenſe, then I am dead while alive. As the ſinner never finds reſt till he come to Chriſt on his throne of grace, ſo the ſaint ſhould never find complete reſt till he comes to Chriſt on his throne of glory. One at my time of life cannot have long to live, cannot have much of his tale to tell; but O! I can tell a pleaſant tale, if I can ſay, when I depart, "Now ſhall I ever be with the Lord!"

Nov.

Nov. 10. 1781.—The ſons of ſenſuality and vice are ſo empty in themſelves, and have choſen ſuch empty ſhadows for their portion, that they know not what device to fall upon to *kill an hour*, as they call it; but the ſaints in glory will find ſuch a fulneſs in God as ſhall employ their eternity. And, O! how am I to blame, that have not my meditations feaſting on this heavenly plenitude, in the ſweet proſpect of the eternal poſſeſſion.

Nov. 11.—Every thing about the future ſtate is aſtoniſhing; but, alas! I cannot think. Yet one thought is raviſhing, that however long God is enjoyed in the heavenly ſtate, ſtill the eternal enjoyment of him remains entire; ſo that when ages, as numerous as thought can conceive, are paſt away, ſtill eternity is the ſame; for theſe millions of ages are only ſo much time, and time can ſubtract nothing from eternity. What would the men of the world give to have an eſtate, a treaſure, out of which they might ſpend as much, and as long as they pleaſe, and yet never be able to impair their eſtate, their treaſure in the leaſt? Such a portion is God to all his people. Now, ſince the eternal enjoyment of God is ſuch, what mere momentary trifles, are all the afflictions that can befal me in the world.

Again, when I have ſpent millions of ages in ſearching into the adorable perfections and fulneſs of God, and am raviſhed with the divine glories that ſhall be revealed to me, ſtill an infinity of perfections and fulneſs remains concealed; for all finite beings can never find out an infinite eſſence. God is the ocean at which angels and ſaints may fill their veſſels, and ſtill he is an overflowing ocean. This ſeems a myſtery and a paradox, that, though ſtill more and more of God is known, which

will be the happineſs of ſaints and angels for ever, yet to all eternity he will remain infinitely unknown; for could he ever be fully known, by ſaint or angel, he would ceaſe to be God. But though his infinitude can never be fully known, yet there are ſuch bright diſplays and glorious manifeſtations of his fulneſs and perfections, as will make all the bleſſed inquirers happy above conception and thought. What divine work is then before me, which will both employ and raviſh every power of my enlarged ſoul through eternity! But when I reflect on my preſent purſuits and daily employ, I can ſcarce believe that I have the faith of ſuch a glorious futurity, of ſuch heavenly employment!

Nov. 13.—It is a ſaying among men, "Familiarity breeds contempt;" and no wonder, for the more we know one another, the more we ſee one another's wants, weakneſſes, and defects, or worſe; but ſo it ſhall not be in the heavenly ſtate; for, as we ſhall grow in our knowledge of God through eternity, ſo ſhall we riſe in our love, and adorations of him for ever. The wicked know not God, therefore they neither fear nor love him; the ſaints below know ſomething of him, and ſo fear and love him in part, and lament that they cannot do it more and better; but the church of the firſt-born know him in a higher degree, and ſo fear and love him in a more perfect manner.

Nov. 15.—What a ſurpriſing change of company ſhall an hour of diſſolution make to me! who, from the ſociety of poor beggarly creatures, ſhall enter into an auguſt aſſembly of prieſts and kings. What a poor appearance do the chiefs or kings of ſome Indian tribes make to the kings of Europe! but how much poorer an

appearance

appearance would the kings of Europe, and of the whole world make, compared to this heavenly ſplendour!

Dec. 1.—Were I carried from my native land, my connections, and my friends, to a country inhabited by utter ſtrangers, of awful appearance and uncommon features, of ſtrange dreſs and unknown tongue, though aſſured that they were all friendly towards me, I could not think myſelf very happy; but if there I found mine elder brother, exalted to ſupreme authority, and head over all the inhabitants of that country, wearing the ſame dreſs he did before, the ſame features, familiarity, and ſweetneſs of countenance, and ſpeaking kindly to my very heart,—how would I find my ſituation bettered, and myſelf extremely happy. Juſt ſo, this is a faint ſhadow of the caſe of the ſaints, when the ſoul, uncloathed of clay, enters amidſt multitudes of diſembodied ſpirits, joins an innumerable company of angels, and enters into the immediate preſence of naked Deity. How aſtoniſhing the change! how ſolemn the appearance! how awful the ſtate! But as there I ſhall find God in my own nature, cloathed in that very body that was crucified for me, bearing the endearing characters of mine elder Brother, High-prieſt, Huſband, and Head, for ever, and acknowledging the relation, and proclaiming peace for ever from his throne of glory; with what a pleaſant luſtre will all heaven ſhine to me! If the thought of naked Deity, to a human ſoul, be terrible, yet this muſt recal tranquillity of mind, that this naked Deity is "Immanuel, God with us," God in mine own nature, for ever united perſonally to human nature, ſoul and body; and even in his glorified ſtate, poſſeſſing, in the higheſt perfection, all the holy feelings of a kinſman Redeemer, a brother, an huſband, a head, towards his ranſomed

ranſomed ones, his brethren, his ſpouſe, and his members.

Dec. 18.—If thoſe who viſit the courts of princes and kings, after being introduced to the royal preſence, ſhould beg to be indulged with ſeeing whatever is moſt noble and entertaining in or about the palace; but inſtead of being led into their muſeums, or libraries, or ſhewn their collection of paintings, ſhould, in anſwer to their requeſt, only have the king daily ſhewn to them; even the royal ſight would ſoon diſguſt their eyes. But the ſight of the king of glory, is the ſum of the happineſs of the heavenly ſtate. As is ſaid, becauſe God could ſwear by no greater, he ſware by himſelf; ſo becauſe he can ſhew none greater, nothing more noble than himſelf, he manifeſts himſelf in the heavenly world. And this viſion ſhall be both aſſimilating and ſatisfying; hence ſays the pſalmiſt, "I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs when I awake."

Feb. 23. 1782.—I cannot tell *poſitively* what the enjoyment of God is; but I can ſay *negatively*, that in the adorations of the higher houſe, there is not the leaſt interruption, diſtraction, or languor. Their communion is intimate and conſtant; not one moment loſt; not a roving eye; not a wandering thought; not an uneaſy moment; not an anxious wiſh.

March 16.—I have a pleaſure in thinking on what I cannot think upon: this ſeems a paradox. But what pleaſure muſt it yield me, to think that I have a bliſs, a boundleſs bliſs, a permanent good, to be enjoyed through eternity, ſo vaſt, and every way ſo wonderful, that I can neither find words to expreſs it, nor thoughts to comprehend

lend it. How appoſite to the heavenly ſtate is the apoſtle's expreſſion, with a little variation: "But we all, with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are eternally changing into the ſame image, from glory to glory, to higher and higher degrees of glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." This will be both the ambition and attainment of every glorified ſaint through eternity.

April 7.—What grand, what noble work ſhall I ſhortly enter upon! To ſearch into all the divine perfections of a Trinity of perſons will be heavenly work indeed. This has employed angels and archangels for ſome thouſand years, and will employ them through all the ages of eternity. And whereas in God there is an infinite number of perfections, though only a few are known to us by name, ſo every perfection is infinite; therefore, when angels and ſaints have explored theſe adorable attributes for millions of ages, ſtill there will remain an infinite plenitude to employ their endleſs reſearches through all evermore. How poor to ſway a ſceptre, or divide kingdoms, in compariſon of this heavenly work; and yet this honour ſhall all his ſaints have, even the meaneſt of the heirs of glory. O now to begin the work of heaven, by meditating much on the divine perfections of that infinite Being, whoſe eternal enjoyment ſhall be my eternal felicity!

April 28.—Every creature, from the angel to the inſect, is pleaſed with its exiſtence; and even ſelf-murderers do not ſo much deſire to deſtroy their being, as to change their ſtate, and better their ſituation, though, as to the method of attaining it, they are miſerably miſtaken; then how glorious muſt that Being be, whoſe perfection it is to be ſelf-exiſtent and independent! In one reſpect I am leſs than nothing, becauſe in every reſpect

ſpect I am worſe than nothing. To rebel againſt his law, to diſpute his power, to quarrel with his conduct, and to have enmity againſt God, is, with a witneſs, to be worſe than nothing.

May 18.—How will I, how will all the ranſomed aſſembly, be filled with wonder at the divine condeſcenſion, that he who has his being of himſelf ſhould have a deſire to the work of his hands! ſhould admit thoſe whom he has brought from nothing, into communion, into familiarity with himſelf!

June 23.—How is a man, who makes an immenſe fortune, admired, extolled, or envied! And yet this fortune can do nothing but procure him the enjoyment of the things that periſh, in common with men of more moderate circumſtances. But the eternal enjoyment of God is a treaſure that tranſcends the arithmetic of archangels, compared with which the whole creation is but as the ſmall duſt of the balance. Then, if I have the hopes of this, what though I ſhould be ſtripped of all tranſitory trifles!

July 21.—As in that happy ſtate there will be an abundant revelation of the divine perfections, ſo there will be a correſponding enlargement of the faculties of my ſoul. How vaſt my knowledge! how deep my judgement! how holy my will! how ſpiritual my affections! how ardent my love! how bright my viſion! and how full my fruition of God!

Aug. 11.—God is ſuch a portion, and the eternal enjoyment of him is ſuch a felicity, that even to be without him is miſery beyond deſcription. How miſerable, then, are they in the extreme, and beyond all extreme, who not only are without him for their portion, ſhall be baniſhed from his preſence, and deprived of his enjoyment; but

but ſhall have him for their Almighty adverſary, their inexorable avenger, and their eternal foe!

Sept. 8.—When Moſes had but forty days more than ordinary communion with God, an heavenly beauty was ſpread over his countenance, ſo that the ſkin of his face ſhone, and ſhone ſo bright that the children of Iſrael were afraid to look on him. Hence I infer, that when I am admitted into more immediate communion, into the cloudleſs viſion, and full fruition of God within the vail, not for forty days, not for forty years, but for eternity; my whole ſoul, every grace, every faculty, ſhall ſhine with heavenly luſtre, and majeſtic beauty! for then I ſhall be like him, becauſe I ſhall ſee him as he is.

The more I know of God, the more I will love him; and the more I love him, the liker to him ſhall I be; and in this ſhall conſiſt the eternal enjoyment of God.

Sept. 22.—Among men it is great honour to ſee the ſovereign; hence the ſeven princes of Perſia are ſaid to ſee the king's face, and to ſit the firſt in the kingdom. How noble, then, to ſee the King of glory! This viſion is not only the moſt glorious and auguſt, but has one virtue, which all other ſights fall ſhort of, that it pourtrays the divine likeneſs on every bleſſed beholder.

Oct. 27.—Here the wonders of nature, and of art, are much admired by the wiſeſt of men; but what a world of wonders ſhall I enter into after death! With raviſhed ſoul I ſhall admire the wonders of redemption, the wonders of incarnation, the myſtery of the perſonal union, the wonders of the eſſential union; in a word, all the wonders of eternity!

Nov. 23.—Some liberal and royal perſonages have beſtowed

beſtowed great gifts on their favourites and friends, but none ever gave himſelf; yet God gives his Son, his ſelf: "I am thy exceeding great reward;" "The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul;" what have I on earth, "whom have I in heaven, but thee?" In the eternal enjoyment of God, then every adorable perfection, every divine attribute ſhall extend mine inheritance, and heighten my bliſs. I ſhall partake of the divine nature, or be made a partaker of his holineſs; I ſhall ſhine in his glory; and by his power ſhall be ſtrengthened in the inner man to ſupport under an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. His eternity ſhall be the charter of mine everlaſting felicity; his wiſdom ſhall make my face ſhine in the heavenly aſſembly; his juſtice, that juſtifies the ſinner that believes in Jeſus, ſhall be the burden of my rapturous ſong, and on his goodneſs and truth ſhall all my raviſhed powers of mind feaſt for ever. How poor, compared to this, to be heir of the univerſe, or lord of creation! to claim the cattle of ten thouſand plains, or the fowls of every mountain! In the faith of this divine plenitude, well may the heirs of God ſmile at a bad ſeaſon, and a froſted crop.

Nov. 24.—Such pomp, ſuch ſplendour, ſuch majeſty, is to be ſeen in the court of an earthly king, that a poor peaſant would be abaſhed to appear there, or enter the palace. What, then, muſt the court, the palace be of the king of ſaints, the king of heaven, the king of glory, the king eternal, inviſible, immortal! And how ſhall a poor worm enter there, where angels cover their faces with their wings!

Feb. 2. 1783.—How melancholy is it that one at my time of life ſhould have no brighter views, no better

uptakings of the heavenly ſtate! But no ſcience can aſſiſt me here; hiſtory knows nothing of the reign of Chriſt and his ſaints, of the golden age of glory; geography cannot deſcribe the new earth, nor aſtronomy the new heavens, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs; and philoſophy ſoars not to ſpiritual things. This happy ſtate is the object of nothing but faith; and let my faith concerning it ſoar as high, and fly as wide as poſſible, ſtill it will fall ſo vaſtly ſhort of the heavenly bliſs, that when I arrive there, I ſhall cry out, "Eye never ſaw, ear never heard, and the heart of man never conceived aright of the heavenly glory." What wonders riſe around me! what glories blaze before me! what myſteries open in my view!

May 10. 1783.—Since a bliſs ſo vaſt, a glory ſo divine, pleaſures ſo refined, and employment ſo raviſhing, await for me, how ſhould my immortal ſoul improve, ripen, and expand, in view of the eternal enjoyment of God! O how ſhocking to ſee a deathleſs ſoul drenched in the cares of this life, intoxicated with the pleaſures of ſenſe, and eagerly engaged in the purſuit of created things, ſhrivelled and dried up with vanity and ſin, to a ſkeleton, a ſhadow! We all know what a ghaſtly appearance a ſkeleton makes, though it is only the bones of our once admired, beloved, and pampered bodies; but the ſkeleton of a ſoul (may I uſe the expreſſion?) is vaſtly more ſhocking, where there is nothing but ſtench and corruption; and, inſtead of the beautiful features of the new creature, nothing but the frightful figure of the old man; inſtead of the lineaments of holineſs, the portraiture of ſin; and, in place of the divine image of God, the curſed likeneſs of the devil. Now,

at the hour of death, how ſhall ſuch a ſoul enter among "the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect," among ſpotleſs angels, join in the ſongs of the general aſſembly, and enter on the work of the heavenly nations? And, alas! is not this too much mine own character, while ſo *unlawfully* taken up about the *lawful* affairs of life?

June 29. 1783.—Though I neither know the employment nor the bliſs of pious departed ſouls; yet, if ever this ſoul felt delight in meditating on redeeming love, on the divine perfections, on his matchleſs goodneſs, and adorable greatneſs, O what delight ſhall I find in the divine preſence, amidſt the emanations of his glories, and bright diſplay of his adorable perfections! And in the world of ſpirits, my diſembodied ſpirit ſhall find no difficulty in converſing with God

Sept. 21. 1783.—The eternal enjoyment of God is ſuch a ſolid felicity, ſuch a ſoul-raviſhing bliſs, an enjoyment that ſo ſatisfies all the expanding, immortal powers of the mind, and ſuch an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, that I am ſurpriſed that every expectant thereof is not all impatience, and does not wiſh to fly into the immediate and full poſſeſſion thereof! Has the poſſeſſion of an earthly kingdom ſhone with ſuch enchanting charms in the eyes of ſome young precipitate princes, that they have attempted to murder or dethrone their lawful ſovereign and father, that they might come immediately to the crown; and ſhall the gratifications of the beaſt, *to eat and drink*, or the mean employment of ſlaves, *to tug and toil about created things*, be they crowns or kingdoms, make me prefer the earthly to the heavenly ſtate? To ſerve God in the leaſt

leaſt below, and to ſubmit to his ſovereign pleaſure, this only ſhall make *me* continue a willing exile from his throne for a while; and with what patience may I wait all my appointed time till my change come, ſince nothing (not even ſin and hell) ſhall diſappoint me of my heavenly bliſs! I only plead, while encamped in the wilderneſs, that the cloud of his preſence may cover me, and the light of his countenance ſhine upon me.

Nov. 22.—What auguſt majeſty and heavenly grandeur belong to that glorious Being, who humbles himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven; not the pearly walks of angels, or the ſapphire-thrones of ſeraphims, but the angels and the ſeraphims themſelves, thoſe pure intelligences, thoſe ſpotleſs ſpirits! What language, then, can expreſs, what heart conceive, this amazing ſtretch of divine condeſcenſion, that he ſhould take, not only the potſherds, the offſcourings of the earth, but the heirs of woe, the children of wrath, the ſcum of hell, into his covenant and family, and at laſt bring them to the courts of his preſence, to the throne of his glory, and admit them to the neareſt fellowſhip, and the moſt intimate communion with himſelf for ever! Should archangels aſſociate with inſects, no wonder this, it is but creature and creature ſtill; but for the Creator of all things to have delight in the work of his hands, and ſhew favour to the rebels of his throne, is kindneſs that muſt flow from heaven, is love worthy of a God! I think the happy ſubjects will find an ineffable delight in viewing and wondering at his condeſcenſion and their own felicity, through an endleſs evermore!

March 7. 1784.—Nothing but ignorance, groſs igno-

rance of the eternal enjoyment of God, prevents me from ardently panting after it; for, had I but one *taſte* of that heavenly bliſs, all created excellencies would fade in mine eye; and even grim death would be welcome to carry me thither. O happy day! when I ſhall be full of heaven and all holineſs; no more the company of two armies within me; no more evil preſent with me when I would do good; not an idle moment, not an impertinent thought; no tempter without, and no ſin within; no ſorrow in my mind, and no pauſe in my ſong.

How raviſhing muſt the eternal enjoyment of God be to elect angels and ranſomed men, when they conſider, that of each claſs there are fellow-creatures lying in utter darkneſs, in inconceivable anguiſh, and ineffable torments, and that only rich grace and ſovereign love made the diſtinction! While God is to the one a father, a friend, a comforter, he is to the other a judge, an enemy, a tormentor. The unhappy wretches are baniſhed from his bliſsful preſence, and the glory of his power for ever, and howl through an eternal night; while the heirs of heaven are for ever with the Lord, poſſeſſing all his divine plenitude, beholding his glories, and adoring his greatneſs, and ſinging the ſweeteſt hoſannas through everlaſting day.

March 17.—If philoſophers and mathematicians have been ſo delighted with ſearching into nature and the ſciences; and if, on ſome freſh diſcoveries, they have, with a kind of tranſport, cried out, *I have found, I have found,*—then with what rapture ſhall ſaints and angels ſearch into the divine perfections through eternity!

June

June 10.—When bleſſed with ſtrong expectation, lively faith, and ſweet aſſurance of the eternal enjoyment of God, I wonder that I am not all impatience to be gone; that I have not a deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far, which is infinitely better than any other ſtate I can be in. And herein I compare myſelf to a young prince, born and brought up in a foreign country, who, though he has been well informed, and fully believes the greatneſs of his father's kingdom, the grandeur of his court, and the glory of his reign; yet ſuch are the enchantments of the place where he lives, and ſuch the endearments of the perſons among whom he has been brought up, and ſuch his connections with them, that he is content to ſojourn ſtill there, and has few longings for his father's houſe; but whenever called home, how will he riſe ſuperior to all his former connections, be aſtoniſhed at his indifference, condemn his mean ſpirit, and bleſs the change of his condition for ever.

July 13.—Such is my carnality, that a tender-hearted Saviour muſt remove it wholly at death, and give me to reliſh ſpiritual things, elſe the eternal enjoyment of God would not be heaven to me!

July 29.—How great, how inconceivably great, muſt that God be whom I ſhall eternally enjoy! for, ſuppoſe my ſoul, when looſed from clay, to fly ſwift as a ſeraph, or quick as thought, in a ſtraight line, for millions of ages, ſtill I ſhould find myſelf in the centre of Deity, with an awful infinity ſtretching beyond me. Thus, his eternity and infinity are correſpondent; for when millions of ages are paſſed away, I am no nearer the period of an unbegun, an endleſs evermore, than at my outſet;

and when I have journeyed for innumerable ages, through the expanſe of eſſence, I am no nearer the limits of an uncreated infinite exiſtence than at firſt. What a fountain, what an ocean of felicity muſt he then be to holy angels, and the redeemed from among men! and why do not my meditations feaſt on his perfections every day?

Aug. 31.—Though the pomp of a Roman Emperor, the grandeur of the great Mogul, the magnificence of a Sultan, a Sophi, or a Czar, and the glory of all inferior crowned heads, were ſummed up in one, and beſtowed on me for ages, yet one moment's enjoyment of God would overbalance all; for, amidſt all this ſeeming felicity, the ſoul might be filled with anguiſh and woe; but in thy preſence there is fulneſs of ſpiritual joy; and at thy right-hand are pleaſures that raviſh every power of the ſoul for ever. Then, if I be an heir of God, an expectant of glory, am I not happier than the kings of any land? And the dawning of this day of glory is not far away.

Sept. 18.—There is a diſeaſe that ſeizes on ſome people, called lowneſs of ſpirits, or melancholy, which inflicts on them ſuch inſufferable anguiſh as renders them extremely miſerable, ſo intolerably wretched, that the poor ſufferers, miſtaking the method of cure, take away their own life, to eſcape from their mental diſtreſs. If ſuch a tumult and agonizing diſquiet can be caſt into the ſoul in this life, what muſt be poured into the damned for ever! But, on the other hand, there is a ſerenity, a mental calm, a peace of mind, (ariſing from a ſenſe of pardoned ſin, and reconciliation to God), ſo noble and divine, that it is called the peace of God, and

ſaid

ſaid to paſs underſtanding, beſtowed on the ſaints in this life, and which ſupports them under all preſſures, and makes them joyful in the midſt of all diſaſters. But, O! what muſt that ſerenity, peace, delight, and ecſtaſy be, which the ſaints ſhall then enjoy in the eternal enjoyment of God!

Oct. 11.—As God is infinitely greater than all his creatures, ſo the enjoyment of God muſt be a bliſs infinitely ſuperior to the enjoyment of all created good. He is the firſt and the laſt, the author of being and life; he is the King eternal, the fountain of all honour, and he is God over all, bleſſed for ever, the giver of all good. Now, for life and health, for honour and greatneſs, for felicity and bliſs, is the eager purſuit of all mankind; but what life is like the life of glory! what honour like the honour that cometh from God! and what felicity like the heavenly felicity?

Dec. 19.—What a bliſs muſt the eternal enjoyment of God be! What a raviſhing ſight to ſee God within the vail! What a ſong, the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb! What an auguſt aſſembly, the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born! What rapturous work, to hold communion with God in glory! What pleaſant employ, to praiſe Jehovah and the Lamb, without interruption, and without end!

Jan. 23. 1785.—With what holy aſtoniſhment, and heavenly joy, ſhall my ſoul be filled, to find myſelf poſſeſſed of the divine plenitude! and all the perfections of a three-one God engaged in making me bleſſed! I ſhall alſo be greatly ſurpriſed, that the proſpect and expectation of ſuch a felicity did not *wholly* ſuppreſs my ſorrow, dry my tears, and ſwallow up my too great ſolicitude about created things.

O what good I get by looking forward to the eternal enjoyment of God! For while my daily loſſes, from various hands, are ſo many, that I think I ſhall ſoon become bankrupt myſelf, or at leaſt, that by the time I have balanced with the world, I ſhall have but a ſmall reverſion to leave to my poſterity, yet I am as compoſed in mind, and as ſerene in ſoul, as if I were amaſſing great riches. I brought nothing with me into the world; I can carry nothing out of it; ſo, in the mean time, if I have food and raiment, I am therewith content; and I commit my poſterity to Providence; nor would I wiſh a better bank than the divine Providence, nor a better curator than Him who is pleaſed to be called "the Father of the fatherleſs."

April 4.—Suppoſe a philoſopher had it in his power, mounted in an aerial chariot, to fly, ſwift as thought, from planet to planet, examine every comet, and continue his excurſions to the fixed ſtars; and ſuppoſe him to find, according to his former opinion, every fixed ſtar a flaming ſun to a planetary ſyſtem, how would his breaſt ſwell with delight at his growing knowledge! and with what contempt would he look down on the grand monarchs of this globe, making the tour through their extenſive dominions, or ſending their fleets and armies to the ends of the earth, comparing them to ants running hither and thither on an ant-hill! Well, then, on my diſſolution I ſhall enter on work as much ſuperior to this philoſopher's, as God is more excellent than all his works.

Since at laſt I ſhall be admitted into ſuch glorious ſociety, raviſhed with ſuch ſacred enjoyment, and engaged

gaged in such heavenly employment, as searching all the perfections of God, no matter how mean and contemptible, how miserable and afflicted I be while below.

June 5.—I confess, I cannot conceive how my soul shall enjoy God in heaven; but there shall be a sweet intercourse, and a divine communion between God and my soul. He will lay open the plan of redeeming love, with which my soul shall be ravished for ever; he will shine in all his dazzling perfections, and my ravished soul shall eternally adore; he will enrich me with every blessing, and bestow on me all his communicable goodness, and my warmest love shall pour on him through all ages. But in vain do I dream of the eternal enjoyment of God, unless I begin to enjoy God *in time*. I must have communion with him *now*, both in his ordinances and providences, if I expect to have communion with him in glory.

Sept. 25.—When I find my love to God so languid, my desires after the eternal enjoyment of God so dull, and my joy in prospect of heavenly bliss so dead, I am apt to question if I can be an heir of God, an expectant of glory; but I must not build on frames of heart, or a Christ within me, but on Christ in the word, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I must also consider, that I am in time, not in eternity, in the militant, not in the triumphant state. But as soon as I am disengaged from clay, every grace shall put on perfection, and my soul be all activity and love; and therefore I now rejoice in hope of the glory of God, whose song is with me by night, and faith's bright prospect of the eternal day of glory may well turn the shadows of the night into morning.

Jan.

Jan. 21. 1786.—In created things poſſeſſion falls far ſhort of expectation. We ſow much, but reap little; but the eternal enjoyment of God will infinitely exceed all my expectations, and my expectations are very great. O that plenitude of bliſs! that fulneſs of joy, that is in thy preſence! thoſe rivers of pleaſures that flow at thy right-hand for ever! It is my daily prayer, then, and tabled requeſt, not only that my neareſt friends, but that thouſands and ten thouſands of my fellow-creatures, may eternally enjoy this infinite good.

May 5.—When I look through the world, do I not ſee *ambition* more or leſs in the breaſt of all, the ſaint not excepted; but here is a divine ambition which Heaven himſelf allows, commands, applauds,—an ardent deſire to be like God, and eternally to enjoy him, which is the higheſt of all attainments, the richeſt of all treaſures, and the beſt of all bleſſings. In a word, I may be greedy on the bounty of God, (no benefactor like him), and aſk heaven and glory for my wife and children, for my friends and relations, and for millions of immortal ſouls, as well as for myſelf.

May 27.—What a rich feaſt will the eternal enjoyment of God be, when the ſpiritual appetite is whetted for the heavenly banquet! Here, my powers of mind are cramped and contracted, or vitiated and corrupted; hence little or no deſire for uninterrupted communion with God; but in the heavenly ſtate, when every power ſhall be purified, and every grace perfected, how ſhall my ſoul be ſatiated with the divine goodneſs for ever! Would not our friends be accounted mad, that would bewail,

bewail, bitterly bewail, our becoming heir to a great eſtate, and going to take poſſeſſion thereof? Why ſo much ſorrow, then, when a ſaint is taken home to God and to glory?

Oct. 15.—How are we ſurpriſed at the change that takes place in the circumſtances of ſome; when a poor man grows rich, or a mean perſon becomes great! but no change is like that of the ſaints at death. Now men, and, alas! ſinners, are my daily companions; but then I ſhall aſſociate with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and all the angels of light. Now I have anxious concern and corroding care about the trifles of time; but then I ſhall be *only* taken up with heavenly and inviſible realities. Now I am feeble and infirm, and tottering on the very brink of the grave; but then ſhall I put on immortal vigour, and eternal youth. Now, in the courts of his grace, it is but a ſmall portion that I know of God; but in the courts of his glory I ſhall ſee him as he is, and be ſatisfied with his likeneſs.

Jan. 14.—Well may the eternal enjoyment of God be called a triumphant ſtate, while the life of the ſaint here is truly militant, always beſet, often buffeted with foes. I wreſtle not only with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, but againſt my wicked, wandering heart; and to have every faculty filled with a ſenſe of divine love, every power of mind going out unweariedly on God, will be a heavenly triumph indeed; and if I ſhall walk in the glorious liberty of the ſons of God hereafter, how melancholy to crawl like a ſlave now!

Oct. 21.—The child of God, the candidate for glory, has

has ſome melancholy moments, when, in the decline of life, and growing frailty, he muſt ſhorten his religious exerciſes, and give over his devotions. But O how my ſoul rejoices in the eternal enjoyment of God! I ſhall not reſt day or night there, yet never be weary. Active and vigorous, I ſhall praiſe like the angels of God. Not a wandering thought to perplex me, not the leaſt ſin to pain me, and Satan ſhall never more haraſs me; the length of the heavenly Sabbath ſhall not caſt me into ſlumbers. O happy immortality! O triumphant ſtate!

Nov. 4.—What can I expect in my pilgrimage heaven-ward, but clouds and darkneſs, ſtorms and tempeſts, hurricanes and thunders? But the day when I am admitted into heaven ſhall break on me with ſuch a blaze of glory as ſhall ſcatter all.

Dec. 15.—What pain muſt a poor ſaint have, when his neareſt friends live not ſo near God as he would wiſh, when his houſe is not *ſo* with God as he could deſire to ſee it, when his own heart is not *ſo* heavenly as he would aſpire at! Well, whatever he may feel in the mean time, yet the moment he is admitted to the eternal enjoyment of God, every pang of grief is forgotten, every tear is wiped away, every growing reflection is ſuperſeded by divine conſolation, and all mental tumult is ſucceeded by an eternal calm, and the whole ſoul filled with divine ecſtaſy and ſacred delight, ſtreaming through every power of ſoul for ever and ever.

June 14. 1788.—How ſhort is my whole life below! but how long is the eternity of glory! The one, in all its various ſcenes of trouble, is ſo ſoon over, never to return,

return, that it ſcarce deſerves a thought; the other, in its boundleſs bliſs and endleſs duration, tranſcends every thought. O what a fool am I, then, to diſquiet myſelf for paſſing ſhadows, when the eternal enjoyment of God approaches ſo ſoon!

June 16.—"What are you doing?" was aſked at one much in trouble of mind. "I am," replied he, "juſt lying looking into hell." O that I, on the other hand, may be able to ſay, I am juſt looking into heaven, meditating on the eternal enjoyment of God, and refreſhed with the ſweet forethoughts of the heavenly bliſs! What will my ſurpriſe be, when I find myſelf made perfect in holineſs, freed from every ſin, my wandering heart at endleſs reſt in God, above the reach of temptation, and the attacks of Satan!

July 12.—It is certainly blame-worthy in an heir of God, in an expectant of glory, to perplex his mind with the difficulties of a few days; and what is our whole time on earth but a few days? When I look at the troubles of time and the joys of eternity, the firſt are like the atoms in the ſun-beam, ſmall, light, inſignificant, and ſcarce viſible; the other are like the meridian blaze, bright and full of beauty, filling the whole heaven, and ſtretching beyond the reach of mine eager eye!

Should it not raviſh me to think, that in a few years, perhaps in a few months, I ſhall mingle with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and with holy angels around the throne, freed from the ſeeds of ſin, and from all earthly ſolicitude and care? I have now near friends, who ſit very near my heart, and I wiſh the ſalvation of their ſouls to ſit neareſt of all; but it is not the pre-

ſence of an earthly relation, but the grace of God, that can make them pious; and I leave my moſt earneſt prayers before his throne, that they may be his in the day when he makes up his jewels. He can call them to his kingdom of grace, after that I am called to his kingdom of glory.

May 10. 1789.—Human life is ſo brittle at beſt, and I am ſo far advanced in life, that every time I put pen to paper, I ſhould expect it may be the laſt. I was inſtructed to think ſo a few days ago, when ſuddenly taken ſo ill, that I thought it might end in death; and now, though much recovered, yet I am nearer to my latter end than ever. Then with my laſt words (for it may not be in my power to ſpeak a word at my laſt) I would recommend religion to my fellow-creatures. Peace of conſcience, ariſing from peace with God through Chriſt Jeſus, ſupports under the croſſes, and ſweetens the afflictions of time, and deſpoils the king of terrors of his ſting. This, to an immortal ſoul, at the hour of death, will be accounted an ineſtimable bleſſing, while crowns and kingdoms will be rejected with diſdain. But when the ſoul is, as it were, half out of the body, and faith in full aſſurance, looking within the vail, what a world of wonders opens on the mind, now panting for God, with an ardour and intenſeneſs never known before! I ſay not, with what a ſtoical, but with what a Chriſtian indifference, does the man quit with all created things, his friends, the neareſt and deareſt not excepted. The more God fills the ſoul, the leſs room will the creature find there; and when God fills the whole ſoul, the creature will find no room at all; and

and then the ſoul, looſed from clay, will ſoar to the eternal enjoyment of God, which will be found to ſurpaſs, infinitely to ſurpaſs, every deſcription, and every thought that ever entered into the heart of man.

Aug. 14.—Often in the family of a ſaint, yea, in the heart of a ſaint, there is ſuch out-breakings of corruption and ſin, that he is weary of his life, and makes his complaint to God; but in the heavenly family there is not one ſinner, nor the leaſt remains of ſin in any heart there. The proſpect of this happy ſtate may comfort againſt grief on every ſide.

May 16.—What a wonderful day will that be, when I am admitted into the ſtate of glory! What a ſudden, what a ſweet tranſition from time to eternity! from a body of ſin and death, to perfect holineſs and complete felicity! from the wranglings and miſtaken views of fellow-ſaints, to the ſweet concord and harmony of heaven!

May 22.—In heaven *only* ſhall I have proper views of ſin, and my deſperate ſituation by nature, while I have enlarged views of the holineſs of God, and the perfection of his divine law; and thence ſhall ariſe rapturous and expanded thoughts of redeeming love, and everlaſting admiration of the glorious Redeemer, God in our nature, God on our ſide, God ſuffering on our behalf, and in our ſtead. Here I am groping in the dark, and get but a peep at the wonders of ſalvation; hence, O for ſhame! it is treated by me as a common ſubject; but in the ſtate of bliſs, I ſhall read all theſe unſearchable myſteries in the light of heaven, in the noon-day blaze of divine glory;

and hence, O happy change! with all the ardour of a ranſomed ſinner, with all the elevation of thought, and vehemence of delight, I ſhall for ever feaſt my ſoul in ſearching into, and meditating upon this rich diſplay of the manifold wiſdom of God!

Aug. 15.—It would be impoſſible for the heir-apparent of a great eſtate, a dukedom, or a crown, not to look forward with heart-felt ſatisfaction to the period of actual poſſeſſion, by his father's will; and the nearer that period approached, the greater his pleaſure, and the oftener would it be in his mind. Why, then, is not the eternal enjoyment of God oftener in my meditations, and pouring heavenly joy through every power of ſoul? O for ſhame! that an heir of heaven, an expectant of glory, ſhould be ſo ſwallowed up of earthly concerns, and periſhing things.

Sept. 26.—What can be a more pleaſant proſpect, than for a perſon, far advanced in years, to look from the brink of the grave on which he ſtands, towards an heaven of unconceivable glory, an eternity of uninterrupted communion with God, in the full aſſurance, that immediately on his diſſolution he ſhall arrive there; and to look back with pleaſure, gratitude, and praiſe, on all the kind providences of three-ſcore years; and with ſtrong faith, to commit his family to the ſame never-failing Friend, that fed and defended him all his life long! Such a ſoul has in a manner begun heaven on earth.

Dec. 12.—How is the grandeur of nobles, and the royalty of crowned heads, envied by the human race! but what is it but a flaſh of lightning, or a blaze of crackling

crackling thorns? Though there were nothing to embitter their ſtate, yet the ſhort duration of their felicity renders it not worth an earneſt wiſh, or cordial aſpiration, when compared with the eternal enjoyment of God. For, let arithmetical calculation be put to its utmoſt ſtretch, let conception and thought be extended as far as poſſible, ſtill the enjoyment of God is beyond all calculation, all conception and thought.

HEAVEN AND HELL;

OR, A

TWO-FOLD VIEW

OF THE

FUTURE STATE.

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NOTHING concerns mankind more than to *prepare* for death, and *improve* for eternity; for we muſt all meet with the one, and be ſwallowed up of the other. But ſo ſeldom do we look forward, and ſo dim are our views, and ſo dark our conceptions of a future ſtate, that we are culpably unacquainted with the world of ſpirits, though ſome of us continually do, as all of us muſt ſoon, mingle with the inviſible multitude.

What I intend by the following thoughts, then, is to exhibit to myſelf and others, a ſcripture-view of a future ſtate, whither every ſon of man muſt arrive, and where, when arrived, he muſt remain for ever.

To look around into the rational world, one would be tempted to think, that the far greater part of

of men expected never to leave this terreſtrial globe, at leaſt to travel no farther than the grave, as all their care terminates on this ſide of it; but practical, as well as ſpeculative Sadducees, to their terror and ſurpriſe, ſhall find, that their ſpirits muſt dwell in a world of ſpirits for ever.

Indeed, the conſent of all nations, as well as revelation, has confirmed the doctrine of a future ſtate, and the immortality of the ſoul; but how groſs and abſurd the views of ſome of them were, every one knows. Yea, notwithſtanding the divine account of it in ſcripture, yet, on account of our ignorance, we ſhall find that ſeveral things about a *future state* will nonplus our inquiry, and confound our conceptions. Let us, however, in the light of the word, view ſome of thoſe things which we may underſtand; and what we do not underſtand, we ſhall ſilently admire.

A future ſtate is of the moſt univerſal concern to all men, as all men at laſt will be fixed in it. Here kings and ſubjects, princes and people, rich and poor, old and young, in a word, Adam and his every ſon, meet, mix, and are no more diſtinguiſhed. How ſtrange, then, that we ſhould ſo ſtrive for *state* on the threſhold of death, and contend ſo for *precedence* at the door of our eternal dome, yet care not whether our laſt, our everlaſting habitation, be a dungeon or a palace! In this I reprove myſelf, in this I reprove thouſands, in this I reprove almoſt the whole world. If a late calculation holds, that throughout the whole earth ſeventy thouſand die every day, ſurely by this time inconceivably numerous are the inhabitants of the world of ſpirits; and a few revolving ſuns, whether we believe it or not, ſhall add us to the number.

What

What I intend to ſay muſt fall into two branches; for though all men die, and ſo enter into the world of ſpirits, yet, according to their ſtate, they are either carried to heaven, or condemned to hell. Therefore, at one view, in two columns, we ſhall glance the eternal ſtate of all men. While the whole world divides itſelf before me into two bodies, the juſt and the unjuſt, the bleſſed and the miſerable, I ſhall ſpeak of each ſociety with reſpect to their places of abode, their perſons, their companions, their employments, and their beatitudes or torments. But with what ſolemn awe ſhould I write, and with what ſolemn awe ſhouldſt thou read, ſince, O reader! in a little our personal, our eternal experience ſhall correct any miſtake in the deſcription.

There are ſome characters of this ſtate common both to the good and the bad, which I ſhall briefly name.

1. This is the *final* ſtate of both. The Saviour is no more preached; but the myſtery of God is finiſhed. Time is no more; a thouſand worlds cannot buy one moment of time, of which, without the leaſt remorſe, we have ſquandered hours, days, months, yea, years away. Golden opportunities are for ever loſt, and as the tree falls, ſo muſt it lie for ever: "He that is holy ſhall be holy ſtill, and he that is filthy ſhall be filthy ſtill."

2. The ſubjects of glory and of wrath are angels and men. The holy angels, who were miniſtering ſpirits to the heirs of ſalvation, now mingle with them in the raviſhing anthems, and loud hallelujahs of the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born; and the ſpirits of darkneſs, that tempted thoughtleſs ſinners, and beguiled unſtable ſouls, are diſpatched together to dwell in everlaſting

laſting burnings, and yell in the anguiſh of conſummate deſpair.

3. This ſtate in both has a reſpect to time. Thoſe unhappy angels that, in the beginning of time, kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitations, and through the whole extent of time, have *drawn* and *driven* the ſons of men into wickedneſs, ſhall be puniſhed accordingly at the judgement of the great day; while the angels of light, who were confirmed by God, and have, with chearful alacrity, been the ſervants of God and his people, through the whole conduct of providence, and work of redemption, ſhall, at the day of judgement, and through eternity, partake of that higher degree of glory and reſt, which ſhall be the portion of all the inhabitants of heaven. Again, the men that in time "ſowed to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting; while thoſe that ſowed to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption."

4. God is not only preſent in both ſtates, but he is all in all to both; but like the cloud of old, while he darts beams of heavenly light on the one, he pours eternal night on the other. Thus he is the ſoul of the joys of paradiſe, and the ſtrength of the infernal pangs. His love ſupplies the rivers of pleaſure that pour at his right-hand; but his wrath, like a ſtream of brimſtone, kindles Tophet for the damned. In a word, God, in all his divine excellencies, in all his adorable attributes, is the portion of the bleſſed; but in the egreſs of all his infinite perfections, he is the enemy of the wicked. Heaven would not pleaſe without his bliſsful preſence, and flames would not pain but for the ſenſe of his diſpleaſure.

5. It is the eternal ſtate of both; not only the final or laſt, but the fixed and everlaſting ſtate of angels and men. Though ſome have dreamed, that at ſome future date the priſon-doors of hell itſelf ſhall be caſt open, and all the agonized ſufferers raiſed to the realms of bliſs; yet the arguments are ſo ſelf-contradictory, and the abſurdities ſo glaring, that no ſound, no ſerious mind, can harbour the opinion; yea, the diſputants themſelves rather ſhow what they eagerly wiſh might take place, than what they expect ever ſhall take place.

I implore the favourers of ſuch conceits to weigh maturely ſcripture and reaſon, and ſee if there be the leaſt ſhadow of probability on the ſide of their ſcheme. 1. The words *for ever* in ſcripture, where not explained by ſome other expreſſion, always ſignifies eternity; as, "Thy throne, O God! is for ever;" and "from everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God." So, "Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire." And, "The ſmoke of their torment aſcendeth for ever and ever;" and, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." 2. If the damned may be delivered from their torments, and raiſed to heaven, ſo may the fiends of darkneſs again become angels of light. 3. If the priſoners of the pit may be raiſed from their abodes of horror to the ſeats of bliſs, by the ſame rule may ſaints and angels be thrown down to hell; for if God can trample on his juſtice to extend mercy to rebels *finally ſentenced*, ſo may he forget his goodneſs to exert his ſovereignty on his followers, though *fully acquitted* before all. 4. If the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed with time, and if ſalvation be only in and through a crucified Saviour offered in the goſpel, how ſhall he be

received or believed in where he is no more offered? 5. Suppose the Arminian tenets true, yet, if man, when he has kindly invitations made to him daily, when he has some glimmerings of hope, when his malice against God and divine things is not consummate, and when his heart is not steeled with despair; I say, if he had it in his power to be happy, according to Arminians, and would not, how shall he, when his malice is at its utmost virulence, when no hope beams around him, when he is frantic with rage, and mad through despair, commence an humble suppliant at the throne of grace, and accept of Christ, whom in his cooler moments he rejected and despised? 6. If God in justice cast sinners into hell, (and in justice he can do no less, since they have all sinned and come short of his glory, and some of them have despised the offers of his mercy, and trampled on the fruits of his love), where is his injustice in keeping them in hell for ever? The punishment of a sinner can never be meritorious of salvation, any more than the punishment of a criminal can procure pardon, or the imprisonment of a debtor can discharge the sum. All nations, in their distribution of justice, approve of the perpetuity of punishment, while on transgressors against their own laws, they inflict punishments that are, in a certain sense, eternal. For example, a thief, by the sentence of the judge, is deprived of his life, and so loses his present state of existence to eternity, and must bid an everlasting adieu to all created things. Torment is the reward and wages of sin; but no atonement for the sinner, any more than a load of irons on the rebel, can give him a claim to be re-instated in the sovereign's favour; or his being broken on the wheel for his intended regicide, can entitle him to be created a peer of the

the realm, ſuppoſe he could return to life again. In a word, if (pardon the expreſſion) ſalvation come by damnation, verily, Chriſt is dead in vain.

Death to the whole world is a ſolemn and awful ſtep. To the true Iſrael it is like the choſen people's paſſage through the Red Sea, towards the land of promiſe, an aſtoniſhing adventure, yet a ſafe journey, having the light of his countenance all the way; while ſtupid ſinners, like the fool-hardy Egyptians, being covered with the darkneſs of wrath, are only travelling to their eternal overthrow.

A change ſo ſudden, (for a few years is a ſhort journey, and a few hours ſickneſs is a quick paſſage to the region of ſpirits), a change ſo great, and to many ſo unexpected, muſt fill the ſubjects of the change with quite other ideas than any living man can have. For a perſon in the full enjoyment of every thing below, by the ſnapping of the vital ſtring, to be at once deprived of his poſſeſſions, ſnatched from his acquaintance, torn from his relations, ſtript of fleſh and blood, and ſhaken out of the world, and in a moment to find himſelf before an impartial bar, that ſentences him to his laſt abode, where he finds himſelf an inhabitant of a world every way diſſimilar to that he lately left, and in a full aſſembly of diſembodied ſouls, muſt afford other views than on this ſide the grave can enter into the heart of man. The ſaints ſhall triumph, with an unknown degree of ecſtaſy, in his love; and ſinners ſhall tremble under the moſt tremendous apprehenſions of his wrath, which they made ſo light of in time, that it never gave them one uneaſy thought.

One thing naturally occurs in viewing the future ſtate, *whether*, and *how* naked ſpirits and diſembodied

ſouls, *know* and *converse* with one another, before the re-aſſumption of their bodies at the reſurrection?

It is worthy of our inquiry, though it may tranſcend our ſearch, to examine a little, in the firſt place, how angels among themſelves, and diſembodied ſpirits among themſelves, are diſtinguiſhed from one another; for what can be more ſimilar, and partake (ſo to ſpeak) more of the ſame identity, than incorporeal, immaterial beings? It is proper to a ſpirit to be ſelf-conſcious, to think, to expect, or look forward, to reflect, or look backward, to deſire, to remember, to adore, or dread, to love, to loathe, to rejoice, to be ſad, to perceive, to underſtand, &c. Now, ſince what is proper to one ſpirit, is proper to all ſpirits, though each ſpirit may, by his ſelf conſciouſneſs, diſtinguiſh himſelf from all other ſpirits; yet, how ſhall any one angel, or diſembodied ſpirit, diſtinguiſh other angels and ſpirits from one another? and without *this*, they muſt be like an aſſembly of ſtrangers, utterly unknown to one another.

Infinite power and infinite wiſdom are diſplayed, both in that aſtoniſhing conformity and ſimilarity that characteriſes every claſs of beings, and in that diſſimilitude that prevails amidſt the moſt perfect likeneſs. To make creatures alike of the ſame component parts, and yet paint a difference in that very likeneſs, though it appears a contradiction, exhibits a very bright diſplay of the manifold wiſdom of God. In the human race, every one knows that the component parts are ſimilar; and yet among thouſands and ten thouſands, perhaps in millions of men, not two are to be found alike. Nay, the ſame wonderful diverſity is apparent, if we confine our attention even to the human face; for though all faces are ſo exactly alike, that they are the diſtinguiſhing

ing character of the ſpecies, yet there is ſuch a variety in the features, as clearly diſtinguiſhes the individuals from one another. Some twin-brothers have been pretty much alike, yet never in all reſpects. I might purſue this opinion, and aſſert farther, that not any two creatures in any claſs whatever, are univerſally or perfectly like one another; and that even ſome claſſes of inſects, have evidently an inſtinct which enables them to diſcern the difference, as is apparent in the honey-bee. Now, the concluſion which I would draw from this is, that ſince infinite power and infinite wiſdom can make a world of men, all poſſeſſed of the ſame parts, members, ſenſes, and faculties, (I do not ſay of all to the ſame degree), ſo that one is as much a man as another, and yet paint and pourtray ſuch a variety in the arrangement of the features, ſuch a diſſimilitude in the lineaments, that not one is wholly like another,—may not the ſame Father of ſpirits imprint ſuch a variety in the arrangement of the faculties, which are the features of their intellect, ſuch a colouring on the powers of the ſoul, as that all ſpirits ſhall ſo differ among themſelves, as to be contradiſtinguiſhable from one another, notwithſtanding of the uniformity that prevails in the world of ſpirits? I ſay, thus we ſee it is poſſible, that the great Creator can depict ſome ſtrokes on immaterial beings, as well as on material bodies, that can make them known to one another, to the mutual comfort of the bleſſed, and to the mutual anguiſh of the damned.

All the good angels, of which there are many, (ſcripture mentions above an hundred millions, Rev. v. 11), have probably names ſuiting their high ſtation in the chain of being, & expreſſive of their ſpiritual qualities. We have more than conjecture for this opinion, as the

ſcripture gives us the names of ſome of them; and what one or two have, all may have. Moreover, God is ſaid to "count the number of the ſtars, and to call them by their names;" not only the ſtars that twinkle in the firmament of the viſible heavens, not only the ſaints that ſparkle in the firmament of the church, and ſhall ſhine at laſt like the ſtars in the kingdom of their Father, but the angels, whom he elſewhere calls "the morning ſtars, and the ſons of God." In a word, this is certain, that the ſpirits in the celeſtial and infernal worlds know one another, and converſe with one another. When we enter among them, we ſhall fully know the manner *how*, though here we are much in the dark; yet as to the manner, we may be permitted to ſuggeſt a few thoughts, even while we confeſs our ignorance of the inviſible world.

It is true, that in our preſent ſtate, we ſee with the eye, we hear with the ear, and ſpeak with the mouth; yet there is a neceſſity of a proper medium for viſion, which is light, and for forming and conveying ſounds, which is air. There is alſo a neceſſity that the ſeveral organs be in a ſound ſtate; for one may have both eyes and ears, and yet be blind and deaf. It is, moreover, requiſite that the ſoul give attention to the things ſeen and heard, otherwiſe a man may have his eyes open and his ears unſtopped, and yet neither ſee nor hear, as may be ſeen when one is ſwallowed up of deep thought. It is evident, then, that the ſoul hears, ſees, ſpeaks, and perceives, through organs, by a medium. While ſhe continues to dwell in the body, ſhe muſt have bodily organs, and theſe organs a proper medium; for the ſoul is forbid, either by the nature of the *tie* to the body, or by the divine appointment, to take in created things at

firſt

firſt inſtance, by her own intelligence; I ſay, created and material things, for what conceptions of, or communion with God, or immaterial ſpirits, the ſoul may have, as a naked ſoul, we ſhall not pretend to ſay. But, though now ſhe muſt receive them by the portals of the earthly tabernacle, we muſt not imagine, that when the houſe of this building is diſſolved, the ſoul loſes her perceptive powers; ſhe then hears, ſees, ſpeaks, and perceives, in a way ſuited to the world of ſpirits, without the intervention of material organs or mediums.

Much brighter glory, and more heavenly ſounds, have been ſeen and heard by the ſpirits of prophets and apoſtles, while their bodies were in a manner deſerted by their ſouls, than ever were communicated through material organs. Now, *ſounds* and *ſights*, though at firſt they ſtrike our eye and ear, are ultimately only impreſſions on our intellect, by which we perceive ſo and ſo. What, then, ſhould hinder ſpirits to make impreſſions on one another, (though in a manner we cannot tell), ſo as reciprocally to communicate their minds, and converſe with each other? Angels, when ſent by Heaven to our lower world, have not only put on a corporeal appearance, but ſpoken with audible voices. Thus, the angel and his heavenly multitude ſung in the ears of the ſhepherds at the birth of Chriſt; and ſince there is joy in heaven among them over the converſion of one ſinner, the ſame ſong they could, and no doubt did ſing, in a manner audible to all the heavenly hoſt, and though without any external voice, yet it muſt have been an auguſt and raviſhing chorus, like that which took place when "the morning-ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy."

Again,

Again, we ſee that angels have a locomotive power, or a power of conveying themſelves from place to place; yet they have neither wings (tho' poets and limners have been pleaſed to repreſent them with ſuch) wherewith to fly, nor feet wherewith to walk. Deprive a man of theſe members, without which we know of no voluntary or automatic motion to purſue a journey, he muſt remain in his place like inanimate matter. But as angels can tranſport themſelves from place to place, run to meet one another, fly to miniſter to the ſaints, without any material members, ſo they can ſee and hear, and converſe with one another, without any of the organs which are abſolutely neceſſary for theſe purpoſes among men. We may conclude, therefore, that the ſouls of men after death, being in many things like the angels of God, ſhall be able to maintain communion with angels, and with one another, in a ſimilar manner.

In ſcripture we find Joſeph, the ſuppoſed father of our Saviour, firſt admoniſhed to take home his wife, then commanded to fly into Egypt, and then informed that he might return into Judea, and all this in a dream, by an angel. This probably was by making the ſame impreſſions on his mind, as a voice pronouncing the ſame words would have done had he been awake. In this manner, it would appear that commiſſions have often, by the miniſtry of angels, been given to the prophets, Jer. xxxi. 26. Daniel, x. 9. and Zech. iv. 1.; for, Moſes excepted, by dreams and viſions were all the prophets inſtructed, Numbers, xii. 6. Thus we ſee that angels can converſe with our ſpirits, while in the body, without the aſſiſtance of our organs, and much more ſo

in

in the world of ſpirits. In the caſe of Joſeph, we are not to think that there was any audible voice, that is, any ſuch percuſſion of the air as gives us the idea of a ſound, otherwiſe Joſeph had been awaked.

From the whole, then, we may ſee that there is a ſociety and communion in heaven among angels and the ſouls of the redeemed, and in hell among fiends and the ſpirits of the damned; for though every ſaint and every angel in heaven can ſay for himſelf, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" and only in God finds his extreme felicity; yet the communion of angels and ſaints in the celeſtial world is a part of the happineſs of the redeemed, and it redounds to the glory of his rich grace and ſovereign love, that before the throne they ſhould mingle their ſongs, out of all nations, kindreds, and tongues. And though every ſinner, and every fiend in hell, may ſay for himſelf, "Of whom am I afraid, O righteous Judge! but of thee?" as only in his divine diſpleaſure they find inſufferable anguiſh, yet, in the curſed ſociety of ſinners and evil angels, there is a no ſmall portion of the torment of the damned, while the eternal howlings of the helpleſs wretches redound to the glory of his power, his juſtice, and inſcrutable ſovereignty. But to return from this digreſſion.

We come now to view the future ſtate in two lights, 1. As containing every thing that the ſaints can wiſh; and, 2. As containing every thing that the ſinner can fear. Well may we be filled with trembling at the report, our lips quiver at the voice, and rottenneſs enter into our bones; but O to tremble ſo in ourſelves *now*, as to reſt in the day of trouble! and O to know the terror of the Lord, ſo as to perſuade men to fly from the wrath to come!

All

All I intend is just to name a few of the most obvious characters of heaven and hell; some of the ingredients of the happiness of the blessed, and of the miseries of the damned; beseeching myself and readers, (if ever this be read), on every article to enlarge our meditations.

We begin with the *places* of our abode; and, in spite of the pride of kings, or grandeur of princes, they must one day be classed for ever with their subjects. There is one God, who has made all things for himself, and who, to all eternity, will be known to be the fountain of bliss as well as of being, either by the outlettings of his love, or downpourings of his wrath; and this it is that constitutes

HEAVEN AND HELL.

1. The very name sounds sweetly in the ear, as meaning something pure, celestial, and divine. It is the throne of God, and the mansions of the blessed. Our Saviour calls it his "Father's house," and promises his people a dwelling there.

2. The happy state is represented by paradise, which signifies a place of pleasure and delight, and no wonder, since the Tree of

1. There is an horror attendant on the very name. Every image fills with aversion. It is the hold of every unclean and foul spirit; the last abode of every ruined son of Adam.

2. The pit is another name given to hell; the great abyss, or bottomless pit. Now, a bottomless pit is a hyperbole every where

of Life grows in the midſt of the paradiſe of God,—a Tree that infinitely excels Daniel's tree; for on its branches lodge all the birds of paradiſe, and under its ſhadow dwell all the nations of the ranſomed, and never ſhall remove. It feeds, it heals, and ſhelters them for ever. How muſt the heavenly planting thrive, when the River of Life waters all the bliſsful Eden, and when the Sun of Righteouſneſs pours down eternal ſummer on the opening flowers! A day of glory ſpreads her balmy wings over all the happy region. On the mount of communion (which has heights which the eyes of angels have not yet beheld) the ranſomed nations reſt; and higher and higher, on this ſpicy mountain, they climb through all eternity, being bleſſed with more and more of the knowledge of God, and with greater

where but here; for as a perſon falling into a pit that has no bottom, muſt ſink deeper and deeper ſtill, ſo the poor wretches are ſinking, through all the ages of eternity, (no ſtop, no period or bottom here), deeper and deeper, ſtill under accumulating wrath, and growing anguiſh. It is the pit in which there is no water; a melancholy abode indeed! Every one knows how difficult it is to get out of a pit; and this repreſents the irreparable condition of the damned. Venomous creatures are the inhabitants of pits. O how true this with reſpect to the pit of hell! There dwells the devouring dragon, there ſtings the old ſerpent, and there hiſſes every ſnake. Again, in pits is every noiſome ſmell, ſtench, and corruption; even ſo here, ſouls putrifying with ſin, and rotting under the curſe for ever, ſmell rank in the noſtrils

greater and greater degrees of glory.

3. Various epithets deſcribe this happy place. It is called an houſe, a palace, and a kingdom; a ſurpriſing houſe into which every one that enters is immortal; a ſplendid palace, where created magnificence for ever diſappears. Curtains of ſilk, faſtened with purple cords to rings of ſilver, and ſuſpended by marble pillars, round beds of gold and ſilver, placed on variegated marble pavements, would not attract the eye of one beholder, while all are gazing, with divine delight, on the uncreated glories of a three one God and the Lamb. And a royal

noſtrils of Heaven himſelf. Again, endleſs night reigns in a pit, and no ſun-beam illumes the dark abode; even ſo, the night of wrath covers all the howling deep, and not a blink of light, not a beam of hope, can pierce the dreadful ſhade.

3. Every deſcription that might affright, and make us fly from the wrath to come, is given of the ſtate of future woe. It is called a priſon, into which the inſolvent debtor ſhall be thrown, and whence he ſhall not come, till he has paid the laſt mite. Tho' the moſt inhuman uſages of all nations, their cruelties, racks, and tortures, towards their malefactors, were ſummed up in one, it bears no proportion to the miſeries of this dark abode, this dreadful dungeon, where horror and anguiſh encloſe the wretched for ever. The floor ſtreams with melted brimſtone; darkneſs

royal kingdom it is, where all the ſubjects are kings and prieſts to God and the Lamb, and are happier than the nobles, higher than the kings of any land.

darkneſs and deſpair form the chains and fetters of the infernal priſoners. There is nothing to ſtretch or recline upon, but flames of fire; while all, ſurveying with unutterable anguiſh, the treaſures of Jehovah's wrath, the indignation of the Lamb, are more miſerable than tongue can tell, or heart conceive.

Even at the day of judgement we may ſee the opening happineſs of the ſaints, the growing miſeries of the ſinner,

While the ſaints,

1. Whatever time they were interred, leave their beds of corruption in triumph, and appear firſt to the deſcending armies of heaven, as if the reſurrection was only for them.

2. They ſhall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and the joy of ſuch a meeting no words can deſcribe,

While the ſinners,

1. Whatever ſtate they are buried in, like miſerable ſlaves, muſt remain in the fetters of death, till their betters have taken the door of the grave, and walked in precedence into the preſence of their auguſt Judge.

2. They, when dragged out of their graves, ſhall be left gnaſhing their teeth below. Grandees, who have

ſcribe, no heart conceive, where millions of exulting ſaints, with chearful hoſannas, join the angelic armies, and attend the King of glory to the general judgement.

3. They ſhall, in the ſight of devils, gnaſhing their teeth with envy and rage at their high eſtate, in the ſight of the trembling multitudes, whoſe knees ſmite together at their approaching doom, and in the ſight of all the armies of light, who rejoice in their joy, and are glad in their glory, be ſet on the right hand of the Judge of all.

4. They ſhall, at the tribunal of the great God, in the audience of all nations, in the ſight of heaven, earth, and hell, be acquitted of every crime, be acknowledged for the ſons of God, and heirs of bliſs, and

have been admitted into the preſence of kings; and kings, in whoſe preſence grandees have trembled, must keep at a diſtance; while thoſe who were accounted by them the off-ſcouring of all things, are admitted into the preſence of the King of kings.

3. They ſhall, in the ſight of all the angels of God, whom, when in life, they refused to make glad by their repentance, in the ſight of ſaints, whoſe hearts are filled with the joys of paradiſe, and in the ſight of evil angels, who mock them with cruel deriſion, be ſet on the left hand of their enraged, omnipotent, inexorable Judge.

4. They ſhall, at the judgement-ſeat of the Saviour, whom, in the days of their fleſh, they refused, crucified afreſh, and put to open ſhame, in the ſight of an aſſembled world, be condemned for all their ſins, and

and be filled with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

5. They are made aſſeſſors with Chriſt; and, ſtrange to tell! ſhall judge the men that condemned them, and the very devils that tempted them in time. And from the deciſion of Jeſus, the Supreme Judge, which they ſhall aſſent to, and approve of, there ſhall be no appeal.

6. They ſhall ſtand, in their exalted ſtation, at his right hand, and ſit on their thrones of judgement, till the final ſentence is executed on all the ungodly, and then aſcend with ſongs of triumph to the higheſt heavens.

and filled with inexpreſſible woe.

5. They are panneled, not only before our incarnate God, but before their fellow-creatures, who, in time, had been condemned at their unjuſt tribunals, and ſhall hear them aſſent to a ſentence which their guilty conſcience cannot refuſe.

6. They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, hurled headlong to their abodes of horror, and caſt, with bitter bewailings, into the loweſt hell.

It is impoſſible to ſpeak fully of the happineſs of the ſaints, or of the miſery of the damned; ſo we ſhall only glance at ſome things of their ſtate after the day of judgement.

The ſaints, at the reſurrection, ſhall be faſhioned like the glorious body of our

The wicked, at the laſt day, ſhall be burdened with their bodies, which they

our exalted Lord, and ſhall be amiable and lovely, vigorous and ſtrong, perfect and complete.—The bodies of the ſaints are immortal, and know no more diſeaſe or death; nothing leſs than immortal could ſupport them under an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

they muſt ſtill carry about with them as living ſepulchres, defiled with ſin, and diſfigured with deſpair, a ghaſtly ſpectacle to themſelves and to one another.—The agonized ſinners are all immortal, and thus are invigorated to ſupport under the wrath of the Almighty. In vain they wiſh for diſſolution, in vain they wait for death, for it is all eternity with them.

In a word, the ſaints are,

1. An aſſembly of prieſts.

2. An army of kings.

3. An hoſt of gods.

Poor ſinners are, in a word,

1. An aſſembly of profane atheiſts.

2. An army of chained criminals.

3. An hoſt of foul fiends.

1. Their bodies have no ſtain, but are ſpotleſs and ſpiritual. They have pleaſant countenances, heaven ſhining in every face, glory in every feature, and heavenly ſerenity diffuſed over all.

1. Their tormented carcaſes have diſfigured countenances, hell pictured in every face, and every feature marred with terror.

2. The joy of heaven ſparkles in their eyes, and the

2. The anguiſh of deſpair is legible in their looks,

the tranſports of their ſoul gives a majeſty to their looks, a beauty to their countenance that cannot be deſcribed. A foretaſte of this heaven has been the privilege of ſome ſaints, as Stephen, whoſe face was like an angel's.

3. The ſaints cannot be fatigued in their adorations through eternity itſelf. In that place the joy of the Lord is their ſtrength. O happy day! when they ſhall ſerve him with the whole ſoul, with chearful alacrity, and feel after him with unremitting ardour and delight!

looks, and the terrors that prey on all their powers kindle their eye-balls with an infernal ferocity, and cover their countenance with a gloom of melancholy which no language can deſcribe. This has been the portion of ſome ſinners, even in this life.

3. Sinners ſhall not be allowed to ſuccumb under their torments, through eternity itſelf, for there the indignation of the Lord ſhall ſupport them to ſuſtain the weight of his wrath. O miſerable day! when the whole ſoul ſhall flee from him with infernal averſion and loathing!

Let us take a ſweet, though ſhort, ſurvey of what the ſaints are freed from; but a mournful glance of what the ſinners are ſubjected to.

I. In their ſtate.
II. In their bodies.
III. In their ſouls.

I. In their ſtate,

1. They are free from all enemies, and live in everlaſting

I. In their ſtate,

1. They are aſſociated with all the bitterest of enemies,

verlaſting peace; in peace with fellow-ſaints, with the angels of light, and with the God of all conſolation. How pleaſant has it been for brethren of the new birth to dwell in unity! but what is all the friendly ſociality on earth compared to the concord of love, and the harmony of heaven!

2. From Satan and his terrible temptations, ſubtle ſuggeſtions, and cruel accuſations, they are redeemed and delivered for ever.

3. They are ſet free from the ſociety of ſinners, the power of the perſecutor, the arm of the oppreſſor, and the tongue of the calumniator and backbiter, and the temptations of ſuch as would ſeduce them to ſin.

4. They are exalted from poverty, meanneſs, reproach, and contempt.

5. Finally, in their ſtate, they

mies, with fellow-ſinners, the devil and his angels; they ſuffer Satan's direful upbraidings, taunts, and inſults, and live in eternal uproar, endleſs contention and ſtrife. A ſmall portion of ſtrife has often embittered human life; but what are all the wranglings of the world compared to infernal jarring and diſcordance!

2. To Satan and his intolerable inſults, cruel treatment, and infernal malevolence, they are ſubjected for ever.

3. They are for ever claſſed with the vileſt ſinners, bloody perſecutors, cruel oppreſſors, envenomed detractors, evil ſpeakers, pimps, and panders; and ſuch a company muſt be a very hell.

4. They are drowned in conſummate poverty, covered with reproach, and cloathed with contempt.

5. They are finally prevented

they are for ever ſet above diſappointment and diſaſter, uncertainty and change, viciſſitude and end.

vented with ſhocking diſappointment, dreadful diſaſters, and fearful calamities, without end.

II. In their bodies,

They are delivered from infirmity, mortality, and pain; from hunger, thirſt, wearineſs, and paſſion; from every unruly appetite, every ſpark of corruption, and the leaſt remains of ſin.

They are adjudged to endleſs corruption, excruciating pain, and agonizing immortality; to raging paſſions, inſatiable appetites, and the full dominion of ſin.

III. In their ſouls,

1. They are delivered from all mental diſquiet, from a wounded ſpirit, which they found ſo hard to bear, and from corroding anxiety.

2. They are delivered from every mental diſeaſe, and all ſpiritual languor.

3. They are freed from the leaſt ſpark of corruption, and from all the ſeeds, the bruiſes, the effects of ſin.

1. They are filled with torturing diſquiet, and gnawing anguiſh, which will be found intolerable through an endleſs duration.

2. Their minds are all diſeaſed, and they have not the leaſt ſpiritual reliſh for any divine thing.

3. Their ſouls are wholly and awfully repleniſhed with ſin, and ſet on fire of hell!

4. They

They

4. They are freed from drowſineſs of frame, from deadneſs of graces, and from languor of love towards God. O happy day!

5. They are fully and for ever freed from darkneſs and ignorance of God and heavenly things.

4. They are dead in their ſins, ſtupid under their ſufferings, and inſenſible of love towards the God of all glory. O wretched day!

5. They are covered with the darkneſs of wrath, and overwhelmed with a total ignorance of God and heavenly things.

Second, What the ſaints are exalted to, and what the ſinners are condemned to.

I. In their ſtate.
II. In their bodies.
III. In their ſouls.

I. In their ſtate,

1. The ſaints are raiſed to the higheſt honour, which ſhall increaſe through all ages.

2. The heaven of heavens is their noble habitation, ſuperior to a city of pearls, with ſtreets of gold, and walls of gems. Saint, mind this, who mayſt be deſtitute of houſe and home.

3. They

I. In their ſtate,

1. The ſinners are condemned to the deepeſt diſgrace in the loweſt pit, which ſhall grow for evermore.

2. Their doleful habitation is the pit of devouring fire, worſe than a den, a dungeon, or a priſon-houſe, whoſe walls are flint, and doors of iron. Mind this, O ſinner! and be not proud of houſes of marble, or palaces of kings.

3. They

3. They walk with raviſhed mind through the paradiſe of God, among the flowers of heavenly bliſs, amidſt the fragrance of his divine perfections.

4. They dwell in the light of God, in the brightneſs of his glory, and in the divine effulgence of all his amiable perfections.

5. They are made kings to him who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

6. They are alſo made prieſts, and as ſuch are for ever admitted into the holy of holies, and ſtand in the preſence of God and the Lamb, and ſerve him in his temple above.

7. They aſſociate with the hoſts of God, with the grandees of heaven, with the angels of light, and with one another, with all the tenderneſs of a refined love,

3. They are chained, with tortured mind, to the centre of the bottomleſs abyſs, among infernal flames, and amidſt the wrath of the divine avenger.

4. They dwell in darkneſs that may be felt, in the midnight blackneſs of conſummate deſpair, and in the horrid gloom of perdition.

5. They are ſlaves to Satan, who is himſelf chained as the chief of malefactors, and the vileſt of ſlaves.

6. They are baniſhed to an infinite diſtance from the preſence of God, and are not permitted to make the remoteſt approach to the throne of grace, which is not forbidden the worſt of ſinners below on his footſtool.

7. They are claſſed with the legions of Abaddon, with the demons of deſpair, with the fiends of darkneſs, and with one another; and with all the ferocity

love, and the vigour of heavenly affection. And the ſocial pleaſures, and ſpiritual improvement, ariſing from ſuch a ſociety, is a part of the happineſs of the bleſſed.

8. Their bliſs has no bound, their felicity no period, their glories are always in the bloom, their knowledge of God, and hence their happineſs, always on the increaſe, and their ſtate is ſecured above change, and laſting as the days of heaven.

ferocity of cruel hatred, and the ſtrength of infernal averſion, the once deareſt friends hate and ſhun one another; and this connection is a part of the miſery of the damned.

8. Their anguiſh has no alleviation, their torments no bound, their miſery no end, their horrors are in their perfection, their hatred and ignorance of God, where ſprings their wretchedneſs, is always on the increaſe; and their deplorable ſtate is fixed above all poſſibility of change, and protracted with the eternal midnight of woe.

II. In their bodies,

1. In the morning of the reſurrection, the ſaints ſhall be beautiful beyond conception; for they ſhall be like their glorious Redeemer, becauſe they ſhall ſee him as he is. Some in this life have been comely to a proverb, and commanded admiration from all

1. At the laſt day, ſinners ſhall be diſfigured beyond belief; for they ſhall be like their father the devil, and ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Some have, even in this life, been proverbially

all beholders; but what is that to the ſplendour of glory, to the beauty of heaven?

2. They ſhall be bleſſed with the moſt perfect immortality, free of pain, of diſeaſe, of decay, like the armies of light, and as far above death as the angels of God.

3. There is an heavenly majeſty in their countenance, an engaging ſweetneſs in every feature, and rapturous joys diffuſe over all, ſo that it is no wonder that glorified ſaints have been taken for angels.

4. Their eyes, ſparkling like the eye-lids of the celeſtial morning, ſhoot raviſhing delight, and reveal an heaven within.

5. Since ſome feaſt on muſic here, and have their ruffled ſpirits ſo compoſed, and their ſouls, as it were, enchanted by the harmony of ſound, what pleaſure muſt they find where every voice is loud, melodious, and proverbially ugly, and made every beholder to ſhudder; but what is that to the depravity of ſin, to the deformity of hell?

2. They ſhall be curſed with a hated immortality, yet full of pain, of diſeaſe, of corruption, like the legions of darkneſs, and devoured of the ſecond death, like the fallen angels.

3. There is a ſullen gloom darkens their countenance, and a melancholy cloud hangs on every feature; keen horrors rage within, and make poor ſinners reſemble infernal furies.

4. Their eyes, dark as the gloom of the infernal night, ſhoot terror and deſpair, and diſcloſe an hell within.

5. Some perſons in time ſuffer extremely from the ſhrieks of tortured wretches, and have all their ſoul thrown into convulſive agonies, from the groans of fellow-creatures. How loud, how afflictive, and dolorous,

and raviſhing! And who can tell but their hoſannas and hallelujahs are heard from heaven to hell?

6. The ſaints ſhall have ſpiritual, active, and nimble bodies, like the angels, which ſhall never more be a clog nor encumbrance to their devotions.

7. In all the glorified aſſembly, there is neither feeble infant, nor infirm old age, every one is decked with the perfection of beauty; and none can complain of any thing wanting or ſuperfluous.

8. Health and heavenly vigour is beſtowed on their immortal frame; not the health of the open champain, the flowery field, or rural village, but the ſtrength of ſalvation and the health of heaven.

dolorous, muſt the cry of conſummate deſpair, the howlings of the damned be! which, for ought we know, may reach from hell to heaven.

6. The ſinners ſhall have ſpiritual bodies, ſo that they ſhall never conſume; yet ſhall they be confined to their abodes of horror, and being made as the fiery oven, ſhall be turned each into a kind of little hell.

7. Among the damned, every one under the preſſure of divine wrath, is feeble as the infant, is infirm as hoary old age; wanting God, they want every thing; and every member, every faculty, could by them be well wanted, being vehicles of wrath.

8. Diſeaſe and infernal languor is rivetted to their immortal bodies; not all the diſeaſes of a camp, a priſon, an hoſpital, not all the ſore ſickneſſes of Egypt, of Europe, of the univerſe, but all the diſ-

9. All their faculties are refined, all their ſenſes ſanctified; they hear nothing but heaven, for it is all heaven with them; and they ſee nothing but God, for God is all in all.

10. They ſhall thirſt and hunger no more, neither ſun nor heat ſhall beat on them any more; they feed on love, and are richly attired with garments of glory.

eaſes of damnation, all the plagues of hell.

9. Their ſenſes are ſharpened and corrupted; they hear and ſee nothing but ſin and hell, for it is all ſin and torment with them, and they delight in nothing but ſin and rebellion.

10. They ſhall have an inſatiable and gnawing appetite, after ſomething ſuited to their immortal ſouls, but ſhall pine with raging hunger, and be parched with endleſs thirſt; fiery wrath, and beams hotter than the noon-day ſun ſhall beat on them for ever; they ſhall be fed with indignation, and covered with eternal reproach.

III. In their ſouls.

1. The joys of their ſouls are the ſoul of their enjoyments, and the ſum of their bliſs; they are admitted to the viſion of God; not that any eye can ſee him who is inviſible,

1. The torments of their ſouls are the ſoul of their torments, and the ſubſtance of their woe. They are debarred from the bliſsful viſion of God; not that any eye can ever be ſo ſhut as not

ſible, but they have ſuch mental views of his divine excellencies, amiable perfections, and adorable greatneſs, that they are raviſhed with his beauty, loſt in his infinitude, and triumph in his greatneſs.

2. They have the brighteſt view of the Deity, in the wonderful perſon of Chriſt; and him they ſee even in his human nature, but crowned with glory and honour, who humbled himſelf once to the death of the croſs, but is now exalted to the higheſt dignity in the higheſt heaven.

3. They ſhall have communion with God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, in and through Jeſus Chriſt, in all his cloudleſs glories, in all his divine fulneſs, in all his communicable perfections, without interruption,

not to ſee God, in ſome reſpects, in themſelves and all around them, but there is ſuch a veil of groſs ignorance caſt over their mind, that all his divine attributes are for ever loſt to them, and by the imperfect views they get, they ſuffer, being malice-bitten by his beauty, confounded at his infinitude, and diſtracted at his greatneſs.

2. Deſpiſing the Saviour in time, they ſhall never ſee him more, either in his human nature, or in his ſtate of glory.

3. Baniſhed for ever from God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, all the communion they have is with the prince of the devils, in his dreadful rebellion, rivetted enmity, and final perdition; and from this ſhall ſpring anguiſh

tion, and without end. And from this ſhall ſpring a joy and delight ſuperior to their moſt ſanguine hopes, their higheſt expectations.

4. If the communion of ſaints in grace be both pleaſant and profitable, how pleaſant, how raviſhing, muſt it be in glory! And in glory they have communion with one another.

5. They alſo enjoy the ſociety, communion, and fellowſhip, of all the heavenly hoſts, as angels, archangels, thrones, and dominions, cherubims, ſeraphims, principalities, and powers.

6. Their faculties are enlarged, and heighten their felicity. Their memory, now invigorated with immortality, retains all the kindneſs of God in time, and all the enjoyments of an ever-opening eternity, while they forget their miſeries as

anguiſh and torment ſuperior to their moſt dreadful fears, and diſmal forebodings.

4. If the ſociety of ſinners, in time, be both diſagreeable and hurtful, how terrible, how ſhocking, muſt it be in torment! And in hell they are bound in bundles, and claſſed together in their torments.

5. Fellowſhip with Satan, which was once their delight, is made their torment, for they are impriſoned with the devil and his angels, the fiends, the furies, the demons of hell.

6. Their faculties are whetted, and increaſe their miſery. Their memory, ſtrengthened to their pain, recals all their aggravated ſins, forgets all their temporal enjoyments as a dream, and retains all the torments of an endleſs evermore, ſtill preſent. Their will

as the waters that flow away. Their will is wholly obſequious to the will of God; their underſtanding, brightened and enlarged, explores the deep things of God, and feaſts on all the perfections of Deity; and their affections, purified from all ſenſuality, are heavenly and ſpiritual in the higheſt degree, and center on God alone.

7. Every grace is ſuperſeded by its better, or puts on perfection; faith reſigns to viſion, hope riſes into fruition, and love receives the crown of immortality. And the whole ſoul goes on in knowledge and perfection through eternity.

8. The ſaints have ſweet views of ſovereignty, and adore the free love of Jehovah in their eternal predeſtination to glory, and to be conformed to the image of his Son.

9. They

will is diametrically oppoſite to the will of God; their underſtanding is darkneſs itſelf, and knows none of the great things of God; and their affections, ſunk to the loweſt pitch of depravity, with growing averſion, fly from God, and center on corruption, ſenſuality, ſin, and the groſſeſt pollutions of the infernal lake!

7. Every vice and vicious habit is infinitely worſe than in life; is rivetted in the ſoul, and at its extreme. Fear (for at times ſinners have their fears) ends in endleſs terror, and doubting in final deſpair, and enmity is conſummate, and the whole ſoul goes on in depravity through eternity.

8. They have hard views, and bitter complaints, on divine ſovereignty, in their preterition and reprobation, and accuſe God as the author of their ſin and ſufferings.

9. They

9. They have holy and exalted ideas of divine majesty,—ideas that dilate and ravish the whole soul; and such apprehensions of God, as raise them into angels, and can no where be found but in heaven. This may comfort against all our narrow views of God which surround us below.

10. They have a joy and delight that is only known in heaven, and makes it all heaven within;—a joy that no stranger can intermeddle with, and a delight in God that nothing can diminish. Let the mourners in Zion remember this.

11. Their love is no more a spark, but a seraphic flame, kindling through their whole soul, and going out with holy ardour eternally on God.

12. They have a sweet, a tranquil, a soul-ravishing recumbency on God. He is

9. They have hateful and horrid views of the great God,—ideas that tear and distract the whole soul, and such sinful apprehensions of God, as sink them into foul fiends, and can no where be found but in hell. This may terrify all that will not think on God before his terror make them afraid.

10. They have an anguish and sorrow that is only known in hell, and makes it all hell within;—an anguish that no comforter can mitigate, and a sorrow by the frown of God, that nothing can abate. Let the mockers in Zion think on this.

11. Their malice and enmity are no more bounded, but bitter and infernal, blazing through their whole soul, and spuing with Satanic antipathy eternally against God.

12. They have a bitter, a disquieting, a soul-racking reluctancy against God. In

is their ſupreme reſt, and immoveable centre, and in his bliſsful preſence they are eternally at home.

13. Their enjoyments are ſuch as are worthy the great, the bleſſed, the only Potentate, to give; and their employments are ſuch as are worthy the ſubjects, the favourites, the courtiers, the children of ſuch a King: They drink of the rivers of his pleaſures, feaſt on his fulneſs, and are eternally ſatisfied with God.

14. They are raiſed to the higheſt honour and renown; and honour is not worth the having till we arrive there, where they aſſociate among themſelves, accompany with angels, and ſtand in the preſence of God

15. They are bleſſed with the moſt amiable proſpects, they ſee God in all the glorified multitude, they ſee heaven in every countenance, happineſs in every

In God there is no reſt for them, nor is he the centre of their ſoul, but from his bliſsful preſence they are eternally exiled.

13. Their ſufferings are ſuch as are worthy the great, the juſt, the ſovereign Judge, to inflict; and their employments are ſuch as are proper to the ſubjects, the ſlaves, the children of wrath: They drink of the wrath of the Almighty, pine in his diſpleaſure, and are eternally tormented by God.

14. They are ſunk to the deepeſt diſgrace and infamy; and no diſgrace is worth the minding on this ſide hell, where ſinners are ſhackled together, accompany with devils, and are for ever baniſhed the preſence of God.

15. They are curſed with the moſt horrid ſpectacles imaginable; they ſee the poiſon of the old ſerpent in all the miſerable crowd, they ſee hell in every countenance,

every eye, and the beauty of Immanuel's land in every thing around them.

16. Being all members of the ſame body, they have the moſt perfect unity and heavenly harmony among themſelves, and every one has ſuch a ſweet ſerenity, ſuch peace of mind, ſuch health of ſoul, and ſuch mental exultation, that they are bleſſed and happy above all our conceptions in time.

17. Their knowledge of God is always on the increaſe, and ſo is their happineſs; they approve of the whole conduct of Providence in all its myſterious windings; they are raviſhed with the myſtery of redemption, and ſee it to be a rich diſplay of the manifold

tenance, miſery in every eye, and the blackneſs of darkneſs in every thing around them, in that howling land.

16. Being all children of wrath, they have the moſt awful diſcord, and horrid jarring among themſelves, that can take place: Yea, every one has ſuch a bitter tumult within, ſuch diſquiet of mind, ſuch a wounded ſpirit, (which ſome in this life have found ſo ill to bear, that, to avoid it, they have finiſhed their preſent exiſtence, and ruſhed on eternal torments), and ſuch mental excruciation, that they are curſed and miſerable beyond our deepeſt thoughts.

17. Whatever they may know of God, they know and tremble; they contemn the myſtery of redemption, quarrel with the whole conduct of holy Providence, and feel a growing terror of the majeſty, and averſion to the greatneſs and glory of that God from

manifold wiſdom of God, and are delighted with thoſe new diſcoveries, which in the light of glory they obtain, of the matchleſs and unfathomable perfections of that God whom they love, ſerve, and enjoy.

from whoſe preſence they are expelled, and whoſe wrath they endure.

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SOME

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THOUGHTS

ON

MARRIAGE.

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THOUGHTS

ON

MARRIAGE.

"MARRIAGE is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled;" and yet marriage is not to be ruſhed upon without ſerious thought, and due conſideration. We ſhould not wiſh ſo much to be married, as to be happily married. In view of which, I ſhall name ſome things to which we ſhould give cloſe attention before marriage, at marriage, and after marriage.

When a young man wiſhes to ſettle in the world, and ſo looks out for a help meet for him, inſtead of making beauty, or ſomething worſe, his object, let him ſeek for one with qualifications which can make the married ſtate happy. And the firſt I would recommend is religion. Though a bad temper with religion may be troubleſome, yet without it it would be intolerable. Amidſt ſo many who have the form without the power of religion, it is no wonder though one ſhould ſometimes miſtake; but if you ſeek ſuch an one from him in ſincerity, who knows all hearts, you ſhall not ſeek in vain.

I could ſay much to enforce ſuch a choice; but if a perſon has no religion himſelf, he will not readily eſteem it

it in another. The man, however, that fears God, will be ſolicitous to be equally yoked with a believer, and to have for the partner of his joys and cares below, the ſame perſon who ſhall be the partner of his ſongs and bliſs above for ever. It will be his anxious wiſh ſo to live in the married ſtate, "as heirs together of the grace of life." It muſt be ſhocking to a child of grace, who believes that God dwells with him, and ſends his holy angels to be miniſtering ſpirits to him, to have every ground to fear, that Satan and the foul fiends of hell are day and night haunting and haraſſing the wife of his boſom, and that ſhe ſhall at laſt be condemned to dwell with them amidſt devouring flames for ever. The beſt ſaint has ſuch a body of corruption within him, that he has need of a ſpur to devotion, and not of a check. And though the unrenewed perſon ſhould be guilty of no groſs ſin, nor hinder the other in the performance of religious duties, yet the carnality of their converſation will be a dead weight on the child of grace, and clog him in his way heavenward. There may be ſome exceptions to the above, as when the impiety and peeviſhneſs of the one has ſent the other the oftener to the throne of grace; but the ſad experience of many can tell, that though grace in one perſon cannot make another holy, yet ſin can communicate defilement whereever it touches, Haggai, ii. 12. 13. becauſe there is corruption in the greateſt of ſaints, but there is no grace in the leaſt of ſinners.

Again, what comfort muſt it yield to the one of the parties, when the other draws an equal yoke in bringing up their family for God, and eſpecially on a death-bed, to think that the ſurvivor will inſtruct the dear young ones in the fear of God!

Moreover, perſons of this character will ſtudy an equalneſs of temper, which will render domeſtic life happy, and will alſo bear loſſes and croſſes, poverty or reproach, the diſtreſs or death of relations, with an equality and magnanimity of mind, which nothing but religion can inſpire.

An erroneous opinion prevails with ſome, that if perſons are eminently pious, they muſt of courſe have a crabbed temper; as if grace and good nature could not dwell together. Now, though it cannot be denied that ſome ſerious perſons are of an unhappy temper, yet there are many in whom heavenly grace, like jewels of gold in pictures of ſilver, is planted on ſuch amiable diſpoſitions, as cannot fail to be eſteemed by every obſerver.

2. A ſecond qualification I would recommend, is that ſhe have a competent ſhare of good ſenſe. By this I do not mean a ſuperior degree of wit, to criticiſe every perſon, and carp at every thing ſaid or done in her preſence; but ſuch a ſtock of good ſenſe as will prevent her from being peeviſh or impertinent, ſullen or talkative, pert or affecting an haughty reſerve; and, on the other hand, will make her affable and obliging to all, eſteemed in every company, and enable her to guide her every affair with diſcretion. No man would wiſh himſelf or his wife to be the jeſt of every company, or that others ſhould always be entertained at their expence; how ſhocking, then, to wed an idiot, or a fool, from ſome ſordid views of intereſt! A proof of her good ſenſe would be a turn for books, and a taſte for reading, not romances and novels, but religious and improving books.

3. It would be agreeable to find one that to good ſenſe joins good nature. Solomon ſpeaks much of the clamorous, the contentious, the brawling, and the angry

woman, which ſhows how bitter life muſt be in ſuch ſociety, and how agreeable to be connected with a perſon poſſeſſed of meekneſs, mental ſerenity, and good nature! Grace is an excellent curb to ill nature, but ill nature is a bad neighbour to grace, and often does a world of miſchief in families.

4. Perſons who would wiſh to wed happily, ſhould marry thoſe that have honeſt connections; for though we cannot anſwer for the conduct of all our friends, yet it is comfortable that our relations be not a grief of heart to us, as Eſau's wives were to Iſaac and Rebekah. Nor ſhould we ever be proud of thoſe friends, however much aggrandiſed with riches and worldly greatneſs, who are open enemies to God, and break aſunder every ſacred bond.

5. They ſhould have an education ſuitable to their ſtation, but eſpecially a competent knowledge of the Chriſtian religion. And the meaneſt ſhould be ſuch maſters of the Engliſh language, as readily to read the Bible and other uſeful books, with other accompliſhments becoming their ſex and department in life. It would be mean in a nobleman to give his children no better education than a poor mechanic gives his; and it would be madneſs for thoſe of common ſtation to wiſh to give their children the education of folks in high life.

6. It conduces much to the happineſs of the married ſtate, that there be an equality between the perſons. It is ridiculous in a nobleman or gentleman to marry his own maid-ſervant, and ſtill more ſo for a lady to marry her own footman. Incidents will often happen, by which the inferior party will ſee himſelf affronted, or think that he is affronted. Though a man of high rank may eſteem his wife, although formerly mean, yet he may deſpiſe her relations, which muſt give her pain.

Nor

Nor do the perſons that are married above their ſtations always behave properly, but often give reaſon to ſuſpect that they rather married their eſtates and ſtation than themſelves ;—while, on the other hand, thoſe that have married below their rank, when they have come to think coolly, ſee their folly, but too late.

Much precious time is ſpent in courtſhip, but no man ſhould begin till he has thoughts of marriage. As " a prudent wife is from the Lord," he ſhould by prayer ſeek direction from heaven, and to this end ſhould ſet apart ſome time, that he may humble himſelf before God, and mourn over the follies of his youth and the corruptions of his nature. In this we often mock God, while we ſeek direction, and in the mean time are fixed on the object. But in nothing do we more need divine direction, for in nothing do we walk more in the dark, than in the choice of a wife. Fancy is apt to impoſe on us, or views of intereſt to betray our judgement. We may have no means of getting her character, except from perſons that are partial in her favour. Beſides, we cannot know the heart; and how many, after maintaining a fair character for a long time, have turned out both bad Chriſtians, and bad huſbands and wives. And therefore we ſhould depend more on the conduct of Providence in this affair, and not lean to our own underſtanding.

I would alſo recommend greatly, an upright and ingenuous conduct in courtſhip. To deceive here is intolerable, and ſeldom goes unpuniſhed. Much time is ſpent idly on this affair, therefore perſons ought to be plain and open, fair and candid, to one another. When a woman, after giving you every reaſon to expect marriage, begins to trifle, and wiſhes to be off

with you, then display a manly spirit, and let her go at once; but never engage any woman's affection, and then leave her without any reason. Nothing can excuse such conduct in either, but something immoral in the character of one or other, not known before.

When persons have agreed to be married, let it be conducted with decency. Some have no happiness but in crowds of guests at their marriage; but the more private the better; and whatever the company be, the entertainment should be like a feast among Christians, and not like the revels of debauchees. It is remarkable how frothy at such times some persons appear, who pass at other times for serious. But as some have died at feasts, we should behave always as dying men; nor can any tell how soon the bridegroom or bride, that are entertained with mirth in their new house, may be carried out of that same house with mourning to the house of silence.

Some persons may think themselves excused from family-worship at such times; but I would say to the bridegroom, It is sad to take up house without God; and no guests should hinder him to implore the heavenly blessing on his new relation. I speak to the serious; this is a duty which, like the morning and evening sacrifice, should never be omitted. It will be no excuse in the day of accounts, that such a day was our wedding-day, and therefore we had no family-worship. The duties of the closet and of the family are not to be superseded by feasting, or the presence of a few guests. If we refuse to hear God in the day of our prosperity, (and what day is more prosperous in life, than when the bridegroom rejoices over the bride?) he may refuse to hear us in the day of adversity.

Persons

Perſons that are entered into the married ſtate, ſhould ſtudy one another's tempers, ſympathiſe with their weakneſſes, bear with their infirmities, cover their faults, and conceal their differences. When we can obſerve the grace of God in one ſo nearly related, it ought to cover many defects. And the man that expoſes his wife, expoſes his other ſelf.

The huſband ought to honour his wife as the weaker veſſel. He ſhould reſpect and eſteem her, and that before his ſervants and children, when they have them; and if in any thing he would adviſe, inſtruct, reprove, or admoniſh her, let it be between themſelves alone. If an huſband ſhews the leaſt diſreſpect for his wife, the infection will ſoon ſeize the meaneſt ſervant in the houſe. A rigid authority may force compliance, but will never make a better wife; while, on the other hand, it muſt extinguiſh love, and may make a woman of fine feelings miſerable. Love between huſband and wife is like two burning coals, which, laid together, aſſiſt each other, and increaſe the flame; but remove the one, the other grows languid, or goes out.

Again, the wife is to obey her huſband in all lawful things, and look on his will as a law. She is to eſteem him as a covering of her eyes, her guide, protector, and ornament. And if ſhe ſees him do ſome things amiſs, ſhe is, in the moſt inſinuating manner, between themſelves, to ſpeak of it to him alone. If in the management of the houſe, or any affair, they have different views, neither of them is to be too poſitive. They are carefully to avoid all ſallies of paſſion, and muſt never be both angry at once, nor ſhould the one argue with the other in the time of their paſſion. They ſhould have no ſecret affairs, no ſeparate intereſts, but the

proſperity of the family ſhould be the endeavour of each. Above all things, they ſhould ſtudy to improve each others graces; and as the huſband is never to neglect family-worſhip, ſo in his abſence, the wife, before her maid-ſervants and children, is not to omit it. Where grace rules in the heart, no arguments are needed; and where this is wanting, none will prevail. Baſhfulneſs may hurt ſome, but it is a ſhame to be aſhamed of ſerving God. Philip's four daughters propheſied, and Lemuel's mother compoſed for his inſtruction. The firſt or ſecond performance will remove the ſhame.

Another thing I would recommend between the married pair, is, that every night after they are in bed, a ſhort prayer ſhould be made one night by the huſband, and next night by the wife. If any diſcordance or differences have taken place between them through the day, by addreſſing jointly a throne of grace, it is to be hoped that their diſputes will die away, and that they will go to reſt in peace and amity. Beſides, by this practice they fall aſleep in the heavenly preſence, and cloſe their eyes with ſweet impreſſions of God on their minds.

When Heaven is pleaſed to bleſs with children, the parents are not to be proud, but thankful and humble. Whenever the mother perceives life in the fœtus, the parents are to pray for the immortal ſoul, wreſtle for its welfare; and in this view, it would be proper to ſet apart a day, or ſo much of a day, either ſeparately or both together, for prayer, and then dedicate the child to God, and implore an happy hour for the pregnant woman; for who can tell, but mother, or child, or both, may die, but death in Chriſt is ſafe to the dying, and ſatisfactory to the living; however, preparation for death

death in ourſelves and neareſt friends will not haſten death, but make it leſs awful when it comes.

A very difficult duty it is to bring up children for God. Many trials parents ought to lay their account with reſpecting their children, on which account they ought to walk circumſpectly, and be always on their guard. They may die young, may be overlaid, even by a careful mother, in the night, may die ſuddenly, may periſh by fire or water, or by a fall, may be killed by the kick of a horſe, or the goring of a bull, or the bite of a mad dog, may be cut off by innumerable things around them, or by the diſeaſes incident to their ſtate; ſo that we need not wonder to ſee our children die ſoon, but may be ſurpriſed to ſee them arrive at maturity. But as ſoon as they begin to know any thing, let them be taught the fear of God. They ſhould be preſent, and taught to be quiet in the time of family-worſhip. Some allow their children to be carried out by a ſervant, becauſe they are noiſy in time of prayer; but this is a bad cuſtom, and ſhould be avoided. Again, they ſhould be gently corrected for faults when very young, and as they grow up, kept at a proper diſtance, avoiding an extreme of fondneſs, or of ſeverity. Too much auſterity may cruſh them, and too much indulgence may ſpoil them. Never correct a child but for a fault, nor for every fault; and when you do it, do it to purpoſe, but not in a paſſion, leſt you ſhould maim them; nor without prayer for a bleſſing on the rod, leſt it ſhould not profit them.

As they grow up, great care is requiſite to form them aright, for though grace can only do this, yet we muſt uſe our endeavours. The firſt thing children can notice,

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is what paſſes in the kitchen, and among the ſervants; but we ſhould rather ſuffer ſome loſs than encourage them to be tale-bearers and accuſers; for if encouraged in this, it will make them attend to nothing but what they think will be agreeable information to their parents, and when once their confidence is ſecured, they may tell falſehood as well as truth. Beſides, what a pity is it that the peace of a family ſhould depend on the tattle of children. Nor ſhould the maſter or miſtreſs of a houſe wiſh to know every trifle that is done by their domeſtics; and for this reaſon, a child ſhould be checked as if he were telling a falſehood, though we know that he is telling the truth, which will be an effectual means to prevent his ſtory-telling; and when they go into their neighbours' houſes, they ſhould never be ſuffered to tell what they have heard, or what they have ſeen, ſince, in the preſence of children, people are not on their guard, and ſo ſecrets may be divulged by theſe little ſpies, that may ſet a whole neighbourhood by the ears.

Again we ſhould take great care that children tell the truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth; and to gain this noble end, in their preſence we ſhould tell no lies in joke, or any thing marvellous, which, as they grow up, they find was an impoſition on their ignorance. We ſhould forgive every little fault on condition they tell the truth, and do not commit it again; and when they lie or equivocate, we ſhould correct them ſeverely, and be at pains to convince them it is not ſo much for their fault that we chaſtiſe them, as for their lies and equivocation.

Honeſty is another virtue we ſhould inculcate on our children.

children. When they find any thing dropped by the way, they ſhould never be commended for it, nor indulged with retaining it, though but a trifle; but they ſhould be ſet a-ſeeking for the owner, that it may be reſtored. When children find reception at home for every thing they find, if of a covetous diſpoſition, they will ſteal from their play-fellows, or neighbours, and ſtill ſay they found it. They ought to get correction if found to have cheated their play-fellows in exchanging toys of any kind, or to have broken their promiſe, and ſuch like.

As they are naturally quarrelſome, they ſhould be corrected for being in broils and ſquabbles, though they pretend that they were innocent, and only ſtood on their own defence. Did all parents thus deal with their children, we ſhould not hear of murders committed by ſchool boys.

All diſpoſition to cruelty ſhould be diſcouraged in them, as cock-fighting, burning toads, and tormenting other creatures, as ſparrows, frogs, mice; and when it is neceſſary to hang dogs, or drown whelps, boys ſhould not be employed, leſt they learn a ſavageneſs in their temper to ſport with the pains of dying creatures. This may ſeem trifling, but the republic of Sparta, I think, hanged a boy that was ſeen cruelly putting birds to death, leſt, if he came to the magiſtracy in the commonwealth, he might treat his fellow-citizens ſo. On the other hand, they ſhould be taught to ſhew pity to any in diſtreſs, to give ſome of their bread or meals to poor or fatherleſs children that may be playing with them, and to feel for others in pain.

They ought to be brought up with a profound regard

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to the Sabbath, kept within doors all day, not ſuffered to play with their toys, or to ſpeak idle words, but to keep ſilence, and, if arrived at any degree of underſtanding, to liſten to what is read; and if they can read, to read themſelves. Leave them to themſelves, they are deſtroyed; but habituate them early to good, and under the divine bleſſing they ſhall be uſeful in their generation, and a credit to all their connections. When very young, they ſhould be taught to pray in a few words, twice a day at leaſt. None can tell how ſoon a child may be brought to the ſaving knowledge of the Saviour, but we are ſtill to be in our duty, leaving the event to God. They ought alſo very early to be carried to church, and made to repeat the text at leaſt when they come home, and more and more of the ſermon as they grow up. Chriſt ſuffered little children to be brought to him, and bleſſed them, and to him, in his ordinances, they ſhould ſtill be brought.

A great weakneſs in parents is, that they will not eaſily believe any thing amiſs in their children, and count the friendly informers only enemies and detractors. But corruption ſpreads through the whole human race, and why ſhould we not believe that our children are naturally depraved as well as others? ſo, if we hear, that when out of our preſence, they do any ill, uſe minced oaths, or ſwear, we ſhould correct them ſeverely. Again, children ſhould be taught equally to reſpect both parents; and when the one wiſhes to correct for a fault, the other ſhould not prevent it.

Nor ſhould parents have favourites among their children, ſince they ſtand in the ſame relation to them all, and have the ſame duties to diſcharge to them all. If,

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as they grow up, ſome ſhould diſplay more ſweetneſs of temper, or a greater diſpoſition to what is good, it were leſs for parents to have a predilection for theſe; but when they have nothing to recommend them above their brothers and ſiſters, except that they were the firſt-born, or are called after a father or mother, and yet there is ſuch a fondneſs conceived for them, that their faults are all overlooked, and their follies indulged, is a capital miſtake in the conduct of parents. Such children often are a grief of heart to them while living, or a diſgrace, when dead, to their very memory. Some parents are too indulgent to all their children, which hinders them from being uſeful members of ſociety. Unleſs they be poſſeſſed of a great ſtock of mother-wit, they are neither ſubmiſſive ſervants, nor proper apprentices, nay, nor good huſbands and wives; ſo much influence has a good or a bad education on their whole after life!

Again, children ſhould be taught a becoming ſilence in the preſence of their parents, and checked if too talkative; nor while young ſhould they be admitted of their council, to know every thing, hear every thing, and give their opinion on every point, leſt it make them too ſelf ſufficient in their own eyes.

As ſoon as poſſible they ſhould be ſent to ſchool, and fitted for ſome honeſt employment in the world; and teachers ſhould not impoſe on parents, who, indeed, too often are willing to be impoſed on, but tell them what genius their children have, that they may not allot thoſe to any of the learned profeſſions, who would make more uſeful mechanics. As ſoon as they form connections, or chuſe companions, care is to be taken that it be not with boys of bad diſpoſitions, or given to any thing wicked.

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Though no boy ſhould be compelled to chuſe a trade by his parents, yet they ſhould direct him in the choice, and ſhould ſelect that buſineſs that has the feweſt ſnares attending it, and in which they may have the feweſt diſtractions in ſerving God. The proſpect of gain or honour has undone numbers. Wo to the parents that ſend their children to iſlands to amaſs fortunes, where even the profeſſion of religion is not to be found! Little do they mind what our Saviour ſays, who is the faithful and true witneſs, "What is a man advantaged, if he ſhould gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?" The army and navy are alſo the ruin of many a hopeful youth. When parents are putting their children to ſome employment by which they are to ſupport themſelves and families, they ſhould implore the direction of heaven, ſince in all our ways we are to acknowledge God, who then will direct our ſteps. Beſides, they ſhould put them apprentices to ſober maſters, who have a religious converſation in their own families. Even then parents are to keep a ſtrict eye over their morals. Nor ſhould their pockets be kept full of money, nor altogether empty. I have often wondered, when parents wrote to their ſons at a diſtance, to find not one good advice, not one word of religion in their letters. Yet a ſeaſonable word might recal to their mind the many good inſtructions they got at home, and ſtop them in ſome career of folly.

When parents intend a ſon to ſtudy divinity, they ſhould not devote him to it from the cradle, ſo that, qualified or not, called or not, he muſt be a preacher of the goſpel. He ought to be a boy of fine parts, and, as far as we can judge, of true piety, otherwiſe, even after a courſe

courſe of education, he ſhould be directed to ſomething elſe.

One memorandum I would give to parents, and that is, that their children are mortal. When they have exerted every care, and been at every expence with them, when they are juſt ſettling in the world, beginning to do well, or are become the ſupport and comfort of their declining years, then death may come and ſweep them away. How heavy ſuch a ſtroke is, none can tell but ſuch as feel it.

The laſt concern that lies on parents, is to ſee their children comfortably married; but often here, as in other things, "the love of money is the root of all evil." As children ought to conſult their parents, ſo parents ought not to carry their oppoſition to the choice of their children too far, unleſs they were going to wed ſome abandoned perſon. Let neither money nor intereſt warp the parents judgements; but let them always wiſh their children married on religious and ſober perſons.

A

STRANGE NARRATIVE

CONCERNING

THE CASE OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN

IN A MAN OF WAR.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

TO THE READER.

AS the gentleman to whom the following Narrative refers may be ſtill alive, as the Captain is, and employed under Government, and now at ſea, the Writer of theſe pages begs, that if any of the officers know what became of him, and be in Great Britain, they will pleaſe ſend a letter to the Publiſher of this, giving a full account. Or if theſe lines fall into his own hand, he muſt know the writer, and is requeſted to correſpond with him, which perhaps may be yet for his advantage. None but ſea-faring people can give the information requeſted. The account is faithful, but it was thought proper only to give the initials of the name. Let every reader reap advantage from the Narrative.

Dec. 1774.

IT appears from this Advertiſement that the Author had intended to publiſh this Narrative. What prevented the execution of his purpoſe is unknown.

STRANGE NARRATIVE, &c.

On Board his Majeſty's Ship P——d,
commanded by M. A. Eſq. Dec. 1759.

MR D. L. had been religiouſly educated, but had early been led aſtray, though not without convictions, which he too often ſtifled. He had been in the navy for ſome years, where his courſe of life was much of a piece with that of others.

In December 1759, being a little indiſpoſed, he ſtaid much below, (for he was a midſhipman), and read a good deal on the "Gentleman Inſtructed." It was obſerved, too, that he choſe to be much alone, which was impoſſible but when in bed; ſo that I have ſeen him ſcarce ſix hours up through the whole day. I aſked him how he could ſleep ſo long? He told me, that he ſlept not four hours out of the four and twenty. His countenance was ſad, and ſomething ſeemed to ſit heavy on his ſoul. Two things I obſerved with joy: 1. He read frequently in the ſcriptures; 2. He could ſpeak, yea, be in a paſſion, without dropping an oath, which before was too habitual to him.

Some time paſſed on without any remarkable alteration; but on a certain Sabbath evening, he was ſo uneaſy in his mind, that he could not keep from throwing his

his body from ſide to ſide, and groaning inwardly. I was going to ſpeak to him, when he aſked if he could get ſome drops for a ſinking of ſpirits? But I knew the cauſe was what no medicine could remove. He went immediately to bed, ſo that we were prevented from converſation about his ſituation at that time, and it was ſome time before an opportunity occurred. One night, however, being alone, we introduced the ſubject, when he burſt into tears, and told me, that he had ſuffered what no tongue could tell; and that he was at ſuch a paſs ſometimes, that, had it not been for his immortal part, he could have thrown himſelf overboard. I reminded him of the freeneſs and fulneſs of grace to repenting ſinners; for he ſeemed rather to need comfort than conviction, and rather to verge on deſpair than preſumption. He ſaid he durſt not deſpair of the mercy of God, but at times there was ſuch a weight on his heart, that he could ſcarce ſupport under it, and that ſometimes ſurely he was delirious. "O what I would give," ſays he, "for a quiet mind! and what is all the world to me without it?" I told him, that ſin was bitter to all, either in a ſincere and godly ſorrow, or in that place where repentance comes too late; and that it was better to travail in the pangs of the new birth, than to live and die without one ſerious thought; and that though his condition was hard, yet it was hopeful.

It was now February 1760, and we were lying on the coaſt of France. One day, when he was very uneaſy, I gave him the 77th Pſalm, which he read, and burſt out in tears. I told him, if God dealt ſo with his favourite ones, could he think it ſtrange, when Heaven had been waiting for him for years and days, that God's hand

hand ſhould lie heavy on him for ſome time, if there might be mercy in the end. A gentleman aſking him if his head ached, "Oh!" ſays he, after he was gone, "it is not my head, but my heart." Thoſe that ſlept near him took notice of him, for in the night-time he could not forbear crying out in the anguiſh of his ſoul. He longed greatly to be free from a man of war. I adviſed him to write his caſe, and his reſolutions againſt ſin, and that he ſhould make a ſolemn engagement to God.

Feb. 20. He ſlept little or none all night. On the 21ſt he ſaid, "Had I ten thouſand kingdoms, I would give them all for a quiet mind." A little after, he cried, "O how contentedly could I live a beggar all my life-time, with this proviſo, that I lived in eaſe! Oh!" added he, "how miſerable a wretch am I, who reſt neither night nor day!" I aſked him if it was any particular thought, or the fear and apprehenſion of wrath, which made him ſo uneaſy? He ſaid, ſometimes he was driven almoſt to the brink of deſpair; at other times there was an inſupportable weight on his ſoul that he could not account for, nor, by all the arguments he could uſe, get rid of; that he was ſometimes afraid of being driven to do violence to himſelf; at other times baſe ſuggeſtions were thrown into his mind, which made him very uneaſy; and what added to all, was the dread of continuing long in that condition. I adviſed him to amuſe himſelf with reading the ſcriptures; that God might be found in his word read, as he had not the opportunity of the word preached; and to be frequently in prayer. He ſaid he was in that exerciſe often; but when he was in ſuch anguiſh of ſoul, he had no compoſure of mind to pray; "for," ſays he, "I ſurely am delirious

delirious at times." I told him I was afraid Satan had his hand in it, for he endeavours to drive men to oppoſite extremes, to preſume on the mercy of God, while they are following the ways of ſin; or to deſpair of it, when leaving the paths of vice. "My comrades," ſays he, "obſerve me now, which makes me a little uneaſy;" for they could ſee him at times toſſing and tumbling in his bed; and concern dwelt on his countenance. I gave him the 42d and 43d pſalms to read, and we continued in diſcourſe a good while, which diverted his melancholy thoughts.

At night, as he had long wanted ſleep, he got ſome drops of laudanum. Next day he told me he had never ſhut his eyes till four in the morning, and then but for a little. He ſaid his leg trembled under him, and that ſometimes he himſelf trembled. He was pretty quiet through part of this day, and at night was invited to ſome company; but eating little, and ſleeping leſs, a ſmall quantity of liquor made him merry, and his comrades congratulated him on his recovery, as they called it. But next morning his anguiſh was ſo great, that toſſing things from him, they ſaid among themſelves he was gone mad. He roſe, and ſeemed very diſquieted; "Oh!" ſays he, "I have had hardſhips, but all that ever I had were leſs than nothing to what I have now; for," ſays he, "a wounded ſpirit who can bear?" I adviſed him to write his caſe, and reſolutions as to reformation, which might be an uſeful memorandum to him in time to come. He read the 102d pſalm.

On Sunday the 24th, an old acquaintance came aboard to ſee him, and he made a great deal too free with the Lord's day; he diverted him pretty much, but their diſcourſe had nothing ſacred or ſerious in it. Next day,

day, he felt himſelf very uneaſy, and ſaid he deſerved it for yeſterday's works. He complained of his ſight being weak, his memory worſe than uſual, and his judgement greatly gone; from which circumſtances I concluded he had ſome bodily diſorder, and even, after all, I was afraid that his ſorrow was not thoroughly godly, but durſt not judge the ſmall beginnings of grace; nor durſt I lay open to him his deſperate condition, leſt he had been driven to deſpair at once.

March 1. 1760. Going to his bed, I found him in tears, and aſked him how he was; he ſaid the arrows of the Almighty were piercing his ſpirit. Afterwards he ſaid, "I am a reprobate!" I told him that it was no ſign of being a reprobate to be afraid of being one; but, beſides, that it did not concern us to trouble ourſelves with unrevealed things. A little after, ſays he, "But I think this is a ſign of it, that I can find no reſt; this is ſurely divine wrath." I ſaid, chaſtiſement was a ſign of ſonſhip, for it was ſons, and not baſtards, that endured it. "Oh!" ſays he, "in a little I ſhall go down to the ſilent chambers of the grave!"

2. Sabbath, in the morning, I found him very uneaſy, and he told me that he had never ſhut his eyes all laſt night, ſo that he did not expect to live long. I aſked him what kept him awake? He ſaid, when he was about to fall into ſlumbers, ſome fearful thoughts made him ſtart. I reminded him of laſt Sunday's work; he ſaid it had made him very uneaſy. I read to him ſome portions of ſcripture, and he lamented that our ſituation would not let us join in prayer, but begged me never to forget him when alone.

3. In the morning he told me he had ſlept none all laſt night alſo, and ſaid he was going the way of all living, and

and wanted to hear ſome words of comfort. We ſpoke a good deal, but he ſaid he was afraid he was an Atheiſt. I aſked him, Did he not believe there was a God? "Sometimes," ſays he, "I do, and ſometimes not; and theſe are the thoughts that torment me, for I think God will never have mercy on me, when ſuch thoughts come into my head, and thence ariſes my pain; ſometimes, too, I am made to doubt if there be a future ſtate." I aſked him if theſe doubts gave him pain, or if he admitted them as a favourite opinion? "No," ſays he, "it racks me that ever they come into my mind; and then how can I believe, or expect mercy from God, when at any time I doubt of his being?" I told him they were ſuggeſtions of Satan, and I produced ſome arguments to confirm him in the belief of a God, and a future ſtate. "But," ſays he, "God will puniſh me for theſe thoughts." I told him, if he ſtrove againſt them, and mourned over them, they were his affliction, but not his ſin. He would often cry for mercy: "O!" ſays he, "I would give a world of worlds to be in your caſe!"

6. He ſaid he deſired to hear ſome comfort for his future ſtate. I then ſtated to him the vaſtneſs of divine mercy, through the merits of Chriſt, the fulneſs of the promiſe, and the freeneſs of the goſpel-call. He aſked what comfort or hope he might have, and begged me not to flatter him; and when I enlarged a little on the promiſes, and the faithfulneſs of the Promiſer, he put up many a petition: "O!" ſays he, "in the midſt of deſerved wrath remember mercy! O be reconciled to me!"

On the following day, he ſent for me, and deſired me to ſpeak with him; and that we might not lay a falſe foundation

foundation in ſo weighty a matter, I laid before him the heinouſneſs of his paſt life; how he had ſinned againſt a good education, againſt the cries and checks of his own conſcience, and, againſt his knowledge, had blaſphemed the ſacred name of God, and profaned his holy day, wallowed in uncleanneſs, and committed all ſin with greedineſs, and that not only for months, but for years, even while Heaven prevented him with mercies, and exerciſed patience towards him. At which, obſerving him to ſhake in his bed, I aſked him what made him to tremble? He ſaid it was horror. "But then," ſaid I, "caſt your eye to the other ſide, and ſee that the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin; that though your ſins were like great mountains, the ſea of meritorious blood could cover them; though your iniquities were like thick clouds, God could blot them out." He put up many petitions.

8.—When I ſaw him, "Now," ſays he, "what thoughts think you come into my mind? That I am not chargeable with my ſins, ſince I have not free-will; for how can I help committing what I have not a free-will to forbear?" I told him that no man, either in a gracious or a natural ſtate, was neceſſitated to do the duties, or commit the vices proper to either ſtate, as a ſtone tumbles downhill by its own weight; for the will of the ſinner, through natural depravity, went always ſpontaneouſly after what was bad, and the will of ſaints, who are made willing in a day of power, being renewed, ſweetly inclines towards what is good; therefore is that expreſſion, "I will draw them with cords of love, and bands of a man." No man now has his will alike free in the choice of good or evil, for that would ſuppoſe him to be in the ſame ſtate with Adam before the fall, but his will is al-

ways prone to that which is evil, till renewed by grace. "Then," says he, "as I had not grace, how could I but chuse that which was evil?" Well, said I, whose sin is that? This is your depraved state, the effects of original sin conveyed to you from your first father Adam, for which you justly may be damned, though you had not committed one actual transgression. But how often have you sinned against light, and the upbraiding of your conscience, so that, with the heathen, you are without excuse. He said he argued against these thoughts, yet they still recurred. I told him he ought not so much as entertain them, even to argue against them, to his own trouble, but believe what God had said, "O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself." Then he breathed many requests to be freed from these thoughts, and we talked a good while together.

One day hearing one swear, "Oh," says he, "that was the way I used to express myself!" Another time he said, "How shall I know that my repentance is true? What if, were I to get better, I should return to my sinful way?" I told him to be sincere toward God, and rely on all-sufficient grace.

9.—I asked him, how he was? "He said, I am dying under the hand of a mighty and just God; but were I reconciled to him, I could leave the world willingly." He had slept none that he knew of all last night. He said he had some rays that refreshed him greatly, but they were gone. I found him always in prayer. "Oh," says he, "I desire to be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ my Saviour."

The same day, when I visited him in bed, "Oh," says he, "my heart is risen up in rebellion against God! I was thinking," says he, "but what, I dare not tell you; I am in despair,

deſpair, I am in the agonies of the damned!" Upon which I ſpake to him, and told him God was as willing to ſave him as he was to be ſaved. "How know you that?" ſays he. "From the ſcriptures of truth," replied I, "through which we ſhould have comfort." Then he ſaid, "O Lord, baniſh, baniſh, baniſh theſe thoughts, and let me get the victory through Jeſus Chriſt my Lord."

Going to him again, I aſked how he was? "Oh," ſays he, "in a miſerable condition; I thought before I was bad enough, but now I feel the height of miſery; theſe thoughts torture me." "But do they not beget an uneaſineſs in you?" "Yes," ſaid he. "Well, what is that from?" Why," ſays he, "from the dread of eternal wrath. O my dear Mr M——, could I be like you!" A little while after, "Oh," ſays he, "a godly ſtate is an happy condition! O were I in that ſtate! I pray with my mouth, but my heart goes not with my mouth; I deſire, but deſires will never do. Every one deſires to be ſaved. Oh! my condition is miſerable, for I feel the agonies of the damned, for I cannot have honourable thoughts of God! O villain that I am, to have ſuch thoughts of God! I was diſquieted before, and could not tell for what, but now I plainly ſee it is theſe thoughts that torment me." I ſpoke a little to him. "I know," ſays he, "that ſo and ſo I ſhould think and believe, but I cannot." I ſpake of getting ſomething for him againſt night, to procure a little reſt, which he had wanted ſo long: "Oh," ſays he, "how can my body reſt with an afflicted mind, afflicted with the fear of that awful and tremendous God who will juſtly puniſh me?" A little after, he ſaid, "O what I muſt endure to eternity! This is a dreadful thought!"

He ſaid, he was torn with awful thoughts: "Oh! muſt I die and periſh eternally? Oh! did I ever think to come to this! but he has juſtly given me over for my former ſins." A while after, I aſked him if he was like to fall aſleep? "How can I," ſaid he, "ſleep, who have nothing to expect but everlaſting miſery?" I bade him not think ſo hardly of himſelf: "O but," ſays he, "my heart condemns me, and God is greater than my heart."

I went, and many others, to ſee a man that had drunk himſelf to death, in a ſhort time, with ſpirits. When I returned, "Now," ſaid I, "there is a ſoul departed into the other world without one ſerious thought." "Oh!" ſays he, "it were better for me to die ſo, than have ſuch thoughts as I have: for," adds he, "I am aſhamed to tell you what thoughts come into my mind; ſometimes I think God is merciful, but then, how is it that he damns the heathen?" I told him, "God, as an abſolute God, could not ſhew mercy to ſinners; it was only in Chriſt." I aſked if he inclined to ſleep? "Oh!" ſays he, "I ſhall ſleep no more, till I ſleep my long ſleep."

About midnight I left him, and about five next morning went to him. "Oh," ſays he, "here is a diſmal ſpectacle." He had ſlept none. A little after, he roſe, and walked to and fro in great agony. "O," ſays he, "I am in the torments of hell!" Then to himſelf, "O Lord, I beſeech thee, have mercy on me, and change my heart. O ſave me, ſave me! I reſign myſelf to thee," and many ſuch like petitions. He read, at my deſire, the 12th pſalm, and we had much arguing.

In the afternoon he fell into ſome ſhort ſleep, and in that time he dreamed he was at home (in Ireland), and had got the better of all his afflictions. A while after, I aſked him how he was; he ſaid he had ſome more comfort,

fort, but his gloomy thoughts ſtill returned to him, againſt which he ſtruggled ſtill.

Next morning he ſent for me about five o'clock, and told me that he had been pretty quiet all night, though he had ſlept none; but that, when he was about to fall aſleep, he thought himſelf juſt a-dying, which made him ſtart from his ſleep. I told him it was but a wild notion, and to baniſh it. Sometimes through the day he was very uneaſy, and told me it was becauſe he could not condemn himſelf. After walking a while by himſelf, he ſaid he had gotten the length to ſee himſelf guilty, and God juſt, ſo as to ſorrow for his ſins; "but," adds he, "how is it that I am full of horror? I thought that godly ſorrow had always had a joy in it." I told him that ſorrow and joy could not be at one time in the ſame breaſt, but that godly ſorrow ended in joy, and that he ought to wait for it. A little after, ſays he, "I am in a black deſpair;" and in little more, "Now," ſays he, "I am eaſier." He continued ſome time ſo, and called for a piece of paper, and wrote ſomething on it; afterwards ſays he, "I think myſelf in a new world." I bade him be thankful.

That ſame evening he was invited into another birth to ſup; he went and continued two hours; but the company was not what he ſhould have been in, for they profaned that great name by which we muſt be ſaved. He went pretty quiet to bed, but was up before me next morning. I could not help thinking he was a little delirious, though he ſpoke ſenſibly. I aſked him how he was; he ſaid he was for ever loſt! I bade him not talk at ſuch a rate: "What elſe," replied he, "can I conclude, when I can neither condemn myſelf, nor repent?" I bade him make his requeſt to him who could pour out

on him the ſpirit of mourning and ſupplication. He ſaid he could not pray, and durſt not lift up his face to God. I was ſtupified at theſe expreſſions, while he added, "How can I ſeek forgiveneſs of theſe ſins, in committing which I cannot be convinced I am guilty?" on which I renewed the argument with him. A little after, "Oh," ſays he, "it is all over with me!" Then again he ſays, "I am as ſure of going into miſery as I am ſitting here!" Then looking wiſtfully on another meſſmate and myſelf, he ſays, "Oh! I muſt leave you all, and go into everlaſting miſery! I cannot pray; is not this a deplorable condition? I cannot repent; Oh! I feel my heart," clapping his hand on his breaſt, "tearing out with agonies." A little after, he ſays, "You ſhall ſee"—then ſtopping, pauſed a little, and added, "Oh! in what way muſt I go out of the world?" He then ſhewed me what he had wrote,—a prayer which might have drawn tears from any eye, and which, while we read it, drew them plentifully from his own. Then walking a good while by himſelf, confeſſing his guilt, and pleading for pardon in Chriſt, ſays he to himſelf, "If the anguiſh be ſuch here, what muſt it be hereafter?"

When we heard ſome news that were not agreeable with reſpect to the war, "Yes," ſays he, "I have ſeen the time when theſe news would have troubled me, but nothing of that kind troubles me now." I reminded him what company he was in laſt night: "Oh!" ſays he, "I am more like an imp than a Chriſtian." A little after, he ſaid, "When you told me the ſtory of Spira, I pitied him, but did I ever think to be in the ſame condition?" Looking on a Bible lying on a table, "Oh!" ſays he, "I have no intereſt in that book?" I once aſked if ever he was tempted to make away with himſelf?

ſelf? "At firſt," ſays he, "I was; but now I have too much fear of entering into the other world, to have any ſuch thought."

12.—His language was much the ſame as before. In the afternoon he ſaid he could not live long.

13.—He was very early up, but went to bed again. Roſe again, and was pretty quiet through the day, during which time we ſpoke a good deal. He ſaid, "Never one was in my condition, for they have had a horror for their ſins, but I have had a horror for my odd thoughts about my not being chargeable with my ſins." I aſked him, if ever any of his diſſolute acquaintance had argued with him in ſuch a ſtrain? "Never," ſaid he. I bade him be watchful againſt theſe thoughts. "I have," ſaid he, "put on a reſolution not to argue about theſe things at all, but to believe what the ſcriptures have ſaid."

About eight o'clock, he went pretty quiet to bed, but was up about twelve, and ſaid, when he awaked, he was in the greateſt uneaſineſs imaginable. He walked a while, and then went to bed again.

Next morning, I aſked how he did; "I cannot," ſaid he, "be worſe in this world; I am ready to ſink under the different paſſions of my mind. O! a bad conſcience is a ſad thing. I ſometimes ſweat through horror, till you might wring my ſhirt. A lad that is come of religious parents, and had a religious education, to be a caſt-away!" Here we had ſome converſation, which quieted him. He was pretty quiet through the day, and ſat eaſy.

Next day, after he had been walking, he came and ſat down, and ſaid, "Lord forgive me! for I was tempted to throw myſelf out at the gun-room port, as there

there was nobody beſide me; but I thought this would be undoing myſelf at once."

Next day, being Sabbath, 16th, he was very uneaſy, and extremely troubled, full of doleful complaints: "O!" ſays he, "there is a great difference between a good and a wicked man; the one has noble thoughts, which the other has not." He complained often, that he could not have honourable thoughts of God as he ſhould, but that his heart roſe up in rebellion againſt God, and how would he have mercy on him? Whereupon I ſpoke a little to him. He ſaid, he was all in a ferment within.

17.—He was much in the ſame way, and continued ſo till Saturday, 22d, when he ſlept ſome, roſe, and was pretty eaſy. He was invited to ſome company, who were drinking merry; he went, and, after drinking a little, was as merry as any of them, ſung ſongs, and ſeemed all ſpirit. I was ſorry to ſee him ſpend the moments of his quietude in ſuch a manner, and not rather in praiſing God for his kindneſs. I was afraid, after all, that there was no change made in his heart; for his old way of talking returned with his cups, that is, ſwearing and curſing. He got drunk, and ſat till two o'clock Sabbath morning.

About ſix o'clock I heard him groaning very loud. About eight o'clock, I went to him, and found him almoſt diſtracted, tumbling and toſſing, and throwing his arms hither and thither. I durſt not ſpeak of terror for fear of the conſequences, and comfort I could not ſpeak in truth. A while after, he aroſe, and was vaſtly diſquieted. I aſked him, what made him ſo? (to ſee if it was a ſenſe of his ſin). "How can it be otherwiſe," replied he, "when I have ſuch a fearful proſpect before

fore me? This is an earneſt of what I muſt feel to eternity, for my heart is hardened, and my ſins too great to be pardoned." I reproved the laſt expreſſion, and withal let him know what his behaviour had been laſt night, at which he ſeemed very ſorry. Snuffing a candle with his finger, he threw it away: "This I cannot ſtand," ſays he, "and how will I endure ten thouſand times worſe through eternity?" At another time, he ſays, "O that I had never been born! I thought not that any mortal could have ſuffered ſo much in time, and what is that which is hereafter?" A little after, walking to and fro in great anguiſh, "O where ſhall I fly?" ſays he, with ſuch a look as I never ſaw any mortal give. In the afternoon, telling him I had heard him in the morning, "Yes," ſays he, "I am expoſed all over the ſhip; but what is that? for in a little I ſhall be expoſed before men, angels, and devils."

24. and 25.—He was pretty quiet, and continued ſo all the week. When I ſpoke to him, he ſaid, "Nobody knows what I endure within." He continued in much the ſame way for ſome time; but, one night, happening to drink too freely with ſome company, he got the worſe of liquor, and next morning, he aſked, if he had ſworn, or ſaid any thing amiſs laſt night? I told him he had;—at which he ſeemed very ſorry. He could not compoſe himſelf to reading on any book.

April 6.—He ſat in his bed, ſometimes ſleeping and ſometimes awake, till four o'clock in the morning, and at night drunk more than an Engliſh pint of ſpirits out of a bottle he kept by him all night, thinking that a mouthful made him ſleep; but he, being diſordered by the ſpirits, or his own troubled mind, on the 8th of the month,

month, deſigned to throw himſelf overboard, but was hindered. At night, when he went to bed, I would let him have no ſpirits, at which he was not well pleaſed; and after he was gone, I ſpoke to the officer of the watch, and had a ſentry ſet over him, leſt in the night-time he ſhould do himſelf any harm. Next night, I continued the watch, but, about eleven o'clock at night, ſome men on deck thought they ſaw him come up, and acquainted an officer on the quarter-deck, who went over the main-deck ſeeking for him, but not finding him, went below, and found him in bed, and the ſentry ſaid, he had not been up. Next day he was much the ſame, but could never reſt in one place.

April 13.—He was very uneaſy all the day, and roſe after he had been in bed, when, conſidering his own weakneſs, for though he kept on foot, he was very much emaciated: "Live," ſays he, "I cannot, and die I dare not." He grew a little better, and on the 18th I took away the ſentry. He was pretty well for ſome time, but I was ſore afraid there was as yet no gracious change, for I could never ſee him read on his Bible as formerly.

April 26.—He got a-drinking with ſome men, where he ſtaid too long, being Saturday; for, as I was informed, he was carried drunk to his bed about one o'clock on Sabbath morning. He ſeemed angry at himſelf afterwards.

May 1. 3. and 4.—He was quite uneaſy, and could get no ſleep, which made him force himſelf into it by ſpirits, againſt which I admoniſhed him. But now I heard nothing about religion or his ſoul, till the 9th, when he told me, that when he paſſed the ſhip's fire, it terrified him to think what hell muſt be; and that many

many times, both by night and by day, the ſweat broke on him as if he had been at hard exerciſe, through anguiſh of ſoul! He ſaid, he was afraid that the Almighty had hardened him for his former ſins; and that another wild thought was come into his head, that the Bible, perhaps, was nothing but a fable.

May 18.—Being Sabbath, he dreſſed himſelf, and went to his watch, having been pretty quiet for a good while, and not having kept watch for more than ſix months. His old companions, in a merry way, welcomed him, ſaying, Rejoice, for the loſt ſheep is found. So they drank together the greater part of the day, continuing their cups till midnight, and their diſcourſe on every idle thing that came into their minds. Sometimes when one of the company ſwore, who never ſpoke one ſentence without an oath, he would reprove him, but, alas! he gave no ſign of having the leaſt grain of ſaving grace.

June 8.—Being the Lord's day, he was ſhaved by the barber, but kept out of my ſight.

July 4.—He ſat late in another birth, got drunk, and ſwore moſt abominably, nor did he now reſtrain himſelf at other times from ſwearing by the ſacred name of God; and ſo he continued, grew fond of company and cards, and took a deal of pleaſure in dreſſing genteelly. Nor did he ſeem to have the leaſt remembrance of his late condition, and would rage, fret, and curſe, if it was ſaid we were to ſtay long at ſea.

Aug. 20.—We came to England. A few days after, he went aſhore, and, it was ſaid, kept bad company. He came aboard, and went aſhore again, and ſtaid till he was run on the ſhip's books, by which both wages and prize-money are loſt.

Sept.

Sept. 25.—The captain ordered one of his lieutenants to take ſome marines with him, and ſeek for him as a deſerter, that he might bring him to a court-martial. He went, but did not find him; yet this being known to him, he made intereſt with ſome captains of men of war, who ſpoke in his favour to our captain. This made him give over theſe deſigns of apprehending him; but he would not let him come aboard his ſhip again to ſave his wages; ſo he ſtaid aſhore, and I never ſaw nor heard of him ſince.

The preceding narrative ſuggeſts ſeveral very important and intereſting remarks.

1. How dangerous is bad company, eſpecially to the young and uneſtabliſhed! We ſee a young man, who was well educated, led by this means to abandon whatever he had been taught to venerate, and early to plunge himſelf into all manner of vice. The ſame companions who occaſioned his departure from God, became afterwards the means of preventing his return. Their looſe notions of religion, their ridicule of all ſerious impreſſions, their wicked example, their pernicious advice, combine to ſtifle his convictions, to baniſh from his mind the good reſolutions he had formed, and to ſeduce him again into thoſe vices from which he was almoſt reformed; ſo that, after he had almoſt eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, he was again entangled therein, and overcome; and the latter end with him was worſe than the beginning.

2 How

2. How great is the power of ſin over unregenerate men! They are its ſlaves, and led captive by the devil and their luſts at their will. It is not their knowledge of the evil of ſin, it is not the convictions of their conſciences on account of the commiſſion of it, it is not the feeling of preſent miſery, nor the fear of future miſery, that will effectually reform them. They love the evil for which they ſuffer. Their reſolutions cannot reſiſt the ſtrength of their inclinations. When quiet is enjoyed, and temptation returns, they fall as if they had never felt a pang, or formed a reſolution; and it happens to them according to the true proverb, The dog is returned to his vomit again, and, The ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire.

3. How wide the difference between conviction and converſion! Many, as in the caſe of Eſau, Judas, and others mentioned in ſcripture, and of this young man, feel the pangs of the former, who never enjoy the peace of the latter. The conſcience of the ſinner may be awakened, and give him great diſquiet, when his heart remains unchanged; and hell may become the object of his dread, when Chriſt and holineſs poſſeſs not his love. The event in the preſent caſe ſhews, that one may be near the kingdom of heaven, and yet not enter in by the ſtrait gate that leadeth to life; that there may be much ſorrow on account of ſin, when there is nothing of that godly ſorrow which worketh repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of; nothing but the ſorrow of the world, which worketh death.

4. How cautious ſhould we be in pronouncing perſons true converts! Perſons may have impreſſions on their conſciences, or their feelings may be ſtrongly agitated under the word, whoſe goodneſs is as the early

cloud, or the morning-dew. How often are that thoughtfulneſs, that melting of the affections, thoſe terrors, in part or in whole the effect of diſeaſe, which leſs attentive obſervers are apt to aſcribe to the Spirit of God, as his peculiar work upon the ſoul! How often is the ſinner's conſcience let looſe upon him, to diſturb him in his wicked courſe, and to make him even a terror to himſelf, when nothing beyond nature has operated, and he is ſtill in the gall of bitterneſs and bond of iniquity! Impreſſions made only on the animal frame, or produced by the operations of natural conſcience, are temporary, and liable to ſubſide into indifference, or carnal ſecurity, or to give place to the influence of thoſe luſts which ſtill have dominion over the ſoul. And if we regard all as true converts who have felt ſuch impreſſions, we will rank many among the ſaints, who will perhaps ſoon undeceive us by their apoſtacy, or to whom we will, in the laſt awful day, hear the Saviour ſay, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

5. How neceſſary the exertion of divine power, in order to change the ſinner's heart! In ſpite of education, of knowledge, of conviction, of the evil of ſin, of the fear of puniſhment, of reſolutions of amendment, the heart will love ſin, and cleave to it, unleſs the Spirit of God work in his powerful and irreſiſtible manner. Reformation will be ſuperficial and temporary when his influence is with-held. Old things will not ſo paſs away, as to be hated and abandoned, unleſs He who moved on the waters of chaos make all things new. The convinced ſinner will relapſe, if he is not born of the Spirit, if he is not created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, if he is not made one of the Saviour's willing people in the day of divine power.

6. What

6. What an awful thing an awakened conſcience, and how dreadful to ſee our danger, and yet refuſe the remedy! If ſin is ſo bitter to the ſinner ſometimes in this world, how bitter muſt it be in the latter end! What fruit have we of thoſe things, the end whereof is death? and what preſent pleaſure in the ſervice of ſin can compenſate the agony which the ſinner feels, when his conſcience riſes up to accuſe him, and ſtill more when he afterwards eats the fruit of his doings? If even lowneſs of ſpirits can render life intolerable, and make a man extremely miſerable, how intolerable muſt be the anguiſh of final deſpair! "The ſpirit of a man may ſuſtain his infirmity; but a wounded ſpirit who can bear?" The ſinner who believes the goſpel may be caſt down by the view of his ſins, but he is not forſaken: but he who rejects the remedy preſented in the goſpel, is, when under the feeling ſenſe of his ſin and danger, not only in perplexity, but ready to plunge into deſpair.

Lastly, What an ineſtimable bleſſing is peace of mind, flowing from faith in the atonement! and how happy they, whatever be their external condition, who enjoy it! Peace of mind, from peace with Heaven, is a greater bleſſing than the poſſeſſion of all created enjoyments. Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.—Thou wilt keep them in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee.

May God prevent impreſſions of the evil and danger of ſin from wearing off our ſpirits! May his Spirit operate on us, not only for deep conviction, but for genuine converſion! May we never reject the comforts of the

goſpel, when we feel the terrors of the law! and may it become our happineſs to be ſprinkled by the blood of Chriſt from an evil conſcience, and to enjoy the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, keeping our hearts and minds through Chriſt Jeſus!

SAYINGS.

SAYINGS.

THE world and its fashion passeth away, and passing perplexeth, therefore cannot be a proper portion to an immortal soul.

Let the shortness of life, and the certainty of death, prevail with thee to spend the one *wisely*, and *watch* for the other.

Be *wholly* at the disposal of Providence, and Providence shall dispose of thee as thou *wouldst*.

In the day of prosperity, be *joyful towards God*; but in the day of adversity, be *considerate towards thyself*. God also hath set the one over against the other, prosperity against adversity, and adversity against prosperity, that in the one thou mayest not be too much exalted, nor in the other too much dejected.

In the days of adversity thy friends will be few, but in the days of prosperity thy flatterers will be many; but balance these with those, that as thou wast deceived by the former, thou mayst not be imposed upon by the latter.

Forgive thy false friend, and do it with joy, since God never fails thee, nor forsakes thee, but is thy faithful Friend.

Count it more glory to forgive the faults of a foe, than to requite the kindneſs of a friend; the firſt is a god-like grace, but the laſt a publican's ſenſe of gratitude.

Be not too much wedded to any thing in the world, for often what man is ignorantly fondeſt of, God wiſely finds fault with.

Regard not the world's eſteem, nor mind its diſreſpect; live in an equal temper of mind, and thou ſhalt bid defiance to all extremes.

Treat not the poor like an inferior rank of creatures, but as fellow-creatures, but as men; for one formed both in the womb, and both came alike naked into the world, and, in a little, ſhall go alike naked out of the world.

Never boaſt of poſſeſſions nor ſums, for even the golden mountain melts in the day of God's wrath.

Love to, or confidence in, the creature to extreme, is the worm in our fair-ſpreading gourd, that makes it wither in a moment.

The only way to keep what we have, is to have nothing in our own keeping, but to commit ourſelves, our all, to God.

Men ſpeak fair, and promiſe fair, but perform little; but God's performance is an enlargement of his promiſe.

Put forth thy finger, and prevent the ſun from falling! How fooliſh this! yet not more fooliſh than to teach the Moſt High how to deal with thee!

Sympathize with others in their moſt uncommon afflictions; for their caſe to-day may be thine to-morrow.

Let patience have her perfect work; for they that wait on God ſhall never be aſhamed.

From

From profperity or adverfity, conclude not God loves or hates thee; for no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him.

Boaft not of relations or friends, for unlefs thou art related to Chrift, the day is coming when thou fhalt not have a friend in earth or in heaven, in time or eternity.

Limit not God, for in doing fo, thou giveft more credit to thy fearful defponding heart, than to a faithful promifing God.

Let falvation be thy great concern, and all other concerns will feem trifling. He that is enough taken up with the one thing needful, will never be too encumbered with many things.

Make fure Chrift in thy intereft, and thy intereft in Chrift; then thy fortune is made for eternity, though all other things fly away as a vifion of the night.

Call no man happy till the day of his death, for none knows the changes of life.

Since thy mountain can never be fo firm that it cannot be moved, let thy confidence in God be fo fixed that it cannot be fhaken.

Let the fins of others prefs more on thy fpirits than thine own forrows.

If fin is thy heavieft burden, then thou wilt not complain of thy foreft afflictions.

Whatever God tries thee with, pleafantly undergo, for he will not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

Call no condition in the world bad, while God is not thine irreconcileable foe.

Art thou in mifery? It is thy birth-right.—Doft thou wifh for mercy? This thou haft forfeited.—Then think much

much of the mercy that comes to thee unmerited, and little of the miſeries that ſhall ſoon be no more.

In thine own plenty, remember the poverty of others, and let the abundance of this ſupply the exigence of theſe.

He that has his all at ſea, is troubled at every ſtorm, while he that hath nothing there, can ſmile in the face of the tempeſt; ſo he that has his treaſure in eternity, needs not be diſturbed at the revolutions of time.

As the heedleſs ſcholar reads beſt with the tear in his eye, ſo the ſaints learn the nobleſt leſſons in the ſchool of affliction.

True grace, like pure gold, ſuffers no loſs in the hotteſt furnace; why then ſhould I be ſo downcaſt at loſing my droſs?

To trifle with time, is to trifle with eternity; for he that will not ſow in ſeed-time, ſhall not reap in harveſt.

A mountain of gold is a great word, but a moment of time is nothing; yet often when near the end of our life, we would give the golden mountain ungrudged for a few moments more.

Death waits for all men, but few of all men can ſay, they wait for and welcome death.

The preſence of God below is grace, above is glory; and without the one, it is vain to expect the other.

Among the men of the world, danger begets fear, and fear ends in deſpondency; but among the ſaints, when grace is in exerciſe, fear rouſes up faith; like David, "When I am afraid, I will truſt in thee;" and faith inſures deliverance.

In the balances of the world, heaven and future glory weigh no heavier than a dream, or night-viſion, while preſent things weigh maſſy and ſubſtantial; but in the

the balances of the ſanctuary, the whole world weighs lighter than nothing and vanity. And all nations ſhall know the truth of the balances of the ſanctuary.

In the ſpiritual life contradictions take place, while eternity is begun in time, and heaven taſted on the earth.

If, going to a city which I know not, I get the aſſiſtance of ſome faithful guide, then, though I would chuſe the left-hand road, becauſe it is pleaſant, or the right-hand road, becauſe of ſome agreeable company I ſee walking along, yet if my guide reprove my error, I ſubmit, and follow him, without complaint or doubt: Juſt ſo, I am travelling to Jeruſalem above, under the conduct of the God of heaven; why, then, am I always complaining of his way, and for taking mine own, when none but his can bring me to glory?

It was ſin in our firſt parents to ſeek to be like God in their own way, becauſe it was forbidden; but it is ſin in all their poſterity not to ſeek to be like God in his way, becauſe it is commanded.

God, in ſovereignty, gives to ſome nothing but himſelf, and to others all things but himſelf; and what is odd, the laſt are looked upon as happy, but in the midſt of their imaginary plenitude, without him they have nothing; and if poſſeſſed of God in the midſt of my momentary need, I want nothing.

It ſhall never be my confidence in my beſt times, that I do not commit ſin; but in my worſt times it ſhall be the comfort of my faith, that the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.

All men delight in their native country; and, wherever they may travel, yet they deſire at laſt to dwell in the very place where they made their firſt appearance: How

How is it, then, that we who pretend to be born from above, have ſo little deſire after our native country?

If we would be very happy to ſee a friend,—a friend who tenderly regards us, and whom we moſt affectionately love,—a friend who has been far abroad, and that for a long time, and all the while attending to our intereſt, and intent on promoting our felicity; how, then, ſhould we long for Chriſt's ſecond coming, who in all theſe reſpects is a none-ſuch Friend!

To know God and ourſelves, is the nobleſt of all knowledge; why, then, employ leſs time therein than in any other ſtudy?

If we receive a common mercy with a ſpecial bleſſing, we ſhall know it by this, that the gracious Giver will be ſtill dearer to us than the deareſt bleſſing, will be ofteſt in our meditation, and uppermoſt in our affection.

Alas! how eaſily may we perceive the ſtench of hell, and the corruption of human nature, in the company of the wicked! but how ſeldom can we diſcern the fragrance of heaven, and the ſweet ſcent of grace, in the converſe of the ſaints!

No man can boaſt of to-morrow, but every man has eternity before him.

To ſeek after a good frame of mind in every duty is our duty, but it is alſo our danger, leſt we grow proud, careleſs, and ſecure: While the poor ſoul, who is like a rolling thing before the wind, flies (and flies with delight) out of itſelf to Chriſt, for aſſiſtance and acceptance in all.

He that expects leaſt felicity, and moſt diſappointments in the world, ſhall make the wiſeſt calculation, and come neareſt his account at laſt.

It is the happineſs of blind mortals, that Omniſciency guides

guides for them. If I know better than God, let me guide myſelf; if not, why diſpute his plan, or be diſpleaſed with his conduct?

We ſhould at all times, and in every caſe, look to God for the bleſſing, for we know not when, how, or from what quarter trouble may come.

The ſea is looked upon by all as the place of greateſt danger, but by ſad experience the poor ſailors know, that more accidents happen in harbour than at ſea: Even ſo, more ſouls ſuffer damage in the ſecure harbour of worldly proſperity, than on the ſtormy ſea of ſanctified affliction.

Every thing is full of God but the unrenewed ſoul. How melancholy, then, that there ſhould be ſuch fearful voids in the midſt of ſuch a glorious plenitude!

He that prepares not to ſanctify the Sabbath, cares not to ſee the Sabbath.

If ſaints find ſuch real pleaſure, ſuch divine delight, in the little communion enjoyed with God at ſo great a diſtance, (for time lies vaſtly remote from eternity), what muſt it be when wafted to the upper world, and ſet before the throne!

When ſinners depreciate the ſaints, by calling them hypocrites, fanatics, and ſuch like, ſhould they be angry? No; but rather pity and deplore them, as madmen in chains, who rage at thoſe around them that are in their right mind, becauſe enjoying liberty.

Our words to God, who is ſo far above us, ſhould be few, but full of faith and love.

Surely affliction with religion make the happieſt life, for the one roots out our carnal pleaſures, and writes emptineſs on the creature, while the other raiſes the affections

affections above the world, and ſets them on celeſtial things.

Sinners make choice of any thing rather than Chriſt, but the ſaints of Chriſt rather than all things elſe; the firſt is indeed conſummate madneſs, the laſt ſpiritual wiſdom; for all things without Chriſt are nothing, while they who have an intereſt in Chriſt are alſo heirs of all things.

Surely the wicked are not only aſleep, but dead in ſin, or they would be terrified out of themſelves at their deſperate condition.

Death is indeed the king of terrors; how divine, how deſirable, then, to have an intereſt in Chriſt, by which this king of terrors becomes a meſſenger of peace!

How do the ſons of pride abhor and diſlike to be compared or ranked with the meaner ſort of men! But, alas! how many, who boaſt their noble blood, yet by ſin, and without grudge, debaſe themſelves even to hell, and aſſociate themſelves with every foul fiend, manifeſting the devil to be their father before the whole world, by doing his works, and refuſe to be aſhamed of the infernal affinity.

No condition ſo happy or ſo miſerable abroad, but we would chooſe to decline the former, and diſcloſe the latter, to ſpend our laſt days in our native country. How depraved are we, then, through ſin, that we have no deſire after a covenant-relation, which we loſt in the firſt Adam, in the ſecond, the more glorious Adam, and returning to our firſt huſband, when it was better with us than now!

Though ſin be to the wicked a ſweet potion, which they drink with pleaſure, yet it will turn a bitter mixture,

ture, which they ſhall drink with pain, and wring out the very dregs.

The univerſal complaint is of trouble and affliction; but keep me free from ſin, and they ſhall never be my ruin.

How reviving is the expectation of peace to men fatigued with war, by land or ſea! Why, then, do the men of the world ſit ſtill in a ſtate of war with God, and not ſeek after reconciliation through the blood of Chriſt, whence flows a peace that paſſes underſtanding?

We come naked into the world, and go naked out of the world, to teach us how little we ſhould concern ourſelves with the world.

They are happieſt in this world who live remoteſt from the world, for they have a noble opportunity of living neareſt to God.

There is no ſlumbering in heaven among angels and glorified ſaints, where the hoſannas are eternal; no ſleep in hell among devils and damned ſpirits, where the howlings are everlaſting; how, then, ſhould we redeem time, not only from ſin and vanities, but from ſleep, if we expect to eſcape the one, and attain the other!

Some men are ſaints in compariſon of ſome ſinners, and yet but ſinners in compariſon of real ſaints; what a wide difference between the greateſt ſinners and the ſmalleſt ſaints!

Truly light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the ſun; how much ſweeter and more intereſting, then, for the ſoul, by the eye of faith, to behold the Sun of Righteouſneſs in his aſſimilating beams!

He is the beſt ſcholar who has learned Chriſt under

his own inſtruction, and the nobleſt linguiſt who, in faith, can ſay, My God and my Lord!

In vain I live, in vain I die,
Unleſs I live and die to thee.

It is true, affliction in itſelf is bitter; but when candied with the ſugar of the promiſe, and preſerved in the golden pot of the covenant, it is aſſuredly a noble medicine for the children of the kingdom.

Profeſſion will not make piety, but piety cannot be without a profeſſion; therefore it is in no reſpect to be deſpiſed, nor in all reſpects to be depended on.

Better is an afflicted life, and a hopeful death, than that in pleaſure, and this in deſpair.

He that would live prudently in this world, and providently for the world to come, ſhould keep them both in a balance before him, to have always in his eye the emptineſs of the one, and the excellency of the other.

Often probabilities prove abortive, while ſeeming impoſſibilities bring forth the deliverance, that we may never reſt on the means, but riſe to Him who calls things that be not as though they were.

To man there is but one thing needful, yet, among all things, of this one thing man is moſt unmindful.

Nothing is a man fonder to know, than future contingencies concerning himſelf, and yet his greateſt happineſs in them is to be ignorant of them.

It is ſtoried of ſome, that they walk in their ſleep; but it is lamentably true of many, that they ſleep while awake, and ſlumber away precious time, without doing one action proper to thoſe who ſhould be awake to an eternal world.

In ſome ſouthern climates, the abſence of the ſun is very

very agreeable to the ſcorched inhabitants; but it is not ſo with the Sun of Righteouſneſs, whoſe preſence always brings a heaven, a paradiſe, to his people.

Neither be charmed with worldly proſperity, nor cruſhed with external adverſity, ſince both are but for a moment.

He that ſleepeth on a maſt in the midſt of a tumultuous ocean, is in a dangerous caſe; but he that is aſleep in ſin, without being once awake to his danger, is in a more deplorable condition.

Sometimes the tempeſtuous ocean enjoys a profound calm, but the wicked are always like the troubled ſea at the time when its waters cannot reſt, but caſt forth mire and dirt.

It is better to be always prepared, than at any time ſurpriſed, eſpecially on matters of the laſt concern, where the loſs may be infinite, eternal, and irretrievable, as in death and a future ſtate.

Not a circumſtance we can be in, but it may be our remembrancer of the world to come. If excruciating pain keep us awake all the watches of the night, it may bring to mind the miſery of the damned, tremendous to the laſt extreme; or, if we can lie down ſafely, ſleep ſweetly, and awake ſecurely, it may afford us pleaſing reflections on the triumphant ſtate above, the reſt that remains for the people of God.

It is true, afflictions cannot impart grace, but it is alſo true that, where it is, they mightily improve it, elſe under them the ſaints ſhould be loſers, when in very deed they are gainers.

As only Noah, and they that were with him in the ark, remained alive when all fleſh periſhed by an univerſal deluge; ſo only they that are with Chriſt in the ark

of the new covenant ſhall remain ſafe, when the flood of vengeance ſweeps away an unbelieving world.

Never will we ſee one either ſick or ſore, but anon he either complains, or ſeeks aſſiſtance; but how many thouſand ſouls are full of diſeaſes, wounds, bruiſes, putrifying ſores, yet, inſenſible of their condition, neither complain, nor ſeek for help.

Patients may depend too much on their phyſicians, phyſicians on their medicines; but we can never come up to thoughts enough noble of the Phyſician of ſouls, or have too high an opinion of the balm of Gilead, the blood of the Lamb of God.

Kings may dwell in magnificent palaces, but the good man has an heaven in his own breaſt.

If the heart of the traveller warm when he hears his own country named, how ſhould the heart of believers rejoice to think on heaven, which is to be their native country through eternity!

The Chriſtian cannot promiſe himſelf much happineſs in this world, but God promiſes him an eternity of happineſs in the world to come; what, then, ſhould trouble the Chriſtian?

Not a day that paſſes but the day of judgement ſhould have a place in our thoughts, for in that day we muſt render an account of our thoughts of every day.

That man need not complain of the days of darkneſs, though they be many, who on ſolid grounds can hope that his laſt day ſhall be his beſt day.

However the ſons of this world may aſpire after greatneſs, yet, to the expectants of a better life, who deſire to lay out their time for eternity, it is a great mercy not to be great.

How ſtrange, that thoſe who of all men have the leaſt

leaſt cauſe of mirth, ſhould of all men be moſt merry! Such is the mournful proof of the exceſs of their inconſideration!

The world looks on the ſaints in a diminutive light, but would change their thoughts, did they conſider that the ſaints claim a Trinity for their portion, a paradiſe for their poſſeſſion, angels and ſeraphims for their companions, the fulneſs of the Godhead for their felicity, and, in all this unbounded bliſs, eternity for their term.

The world, and the men of the world, in the time of our greateſt diſtreſs, like Abſalom's mule, flinch and utterly forſake us; but, in all our afflictions, Chriſt and the promiſes, like David's faithful friends, are on our right-hand and on our left.

If the company of the great, and the kiſs of a king's hand, be ſo much eſteemed among the ſons of men, what ſhould the ſaints think of that fellowſhip which they ſometimes have with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and of that eternal communion which they ſhall in a little enter into!

Had the king under whom I live promiſed, that ſhortly he would ſend his guards for me to come and live at his palace, would not I continually hold myſelf in readineſs, nor weary though he delayed a little while? why, then, is not my ſoul always ready to depart, ſeeing I have his promiſe, which is very faithfulneſs, that he will ſend his angels for me? And ſurely, Lord, it cannot now be long.

How great is the difference between the king's ſervants, and the ſervants of the King of kings! The greater part of the one are a kind of incarnate devils, but all the other are growing angels.

When ſinners, like Judas, ſhall go out for eternity

from the ſociety of the ſaints, then ſhall Jeſus, before the whole aſſembly of his choſen ones, begin the divine diſcourſe, which ſhall never have an end.

Thoſe are our beſt friends who reprove us oftenеſt for our good, and beſtow the nobleſt gifts, who pour out petitions for us at the throne of grace; and here the poor ſaint, who is not worth a ſhilling, may deal with the munificence of a king.

PRIVATE

PRIVATE READINGS

ON THE

PSALMS OF DAVID.

PSALM I.

VER. 1.—BLESSED, abundantly bleſſed, is the man who, being born again, walks as an expectant of glory, and daily exhibits this true, but aſtoniſhing contraſt, that he dwells on earth, and yet has his converſation in heaven. He ceaſes from the inſtruction that cauſes to err, and hates the aſſemblies of the wicked, remembering, that a companion of fools (and ſinners are the greateſt fools) ſhall be deſtroyed. And though in many aſſemblies he may occupy the room of the unlearned, yet of him it can never be ſaid, There ſits the irreligious ſcoffer!

VER. 2.—The law, once dreadful and tremendous, but now divinely mild, ſince diveſted of the curſe, and turned into a rule of life, affords him ſweet delight, and is his conſtant meditation. Thus the toilſome day is ſhortened, and, at the hour of ſlumber, he falls into repoſe, with all the precious promiſes thronging into his mind, and guarding his felicity.

VER.

VER. 3.—Not the fruit-bearing tree, that is planted by the fructifying ſtream, in its autumnal beauty, can yield ſo noble a proſpect as the ſaint of God, that abounds in fruits of righteouſneſs. And, neither chilled with cold indifference, nor heated with prepoſterous zeal, can his conduct be accuſed of extremes, but he always brings forth his fruit in due ſeaſon. Not a leaf of this tree of righteouſneſs ſhall wither, for in his verdure God that planted him is glorified. Moreover, proſperity ſhall attend his undertakings; or, though they ſhould not ſucceed, ſtill his ſoul, his better part, ſhall proſper.

VER. 4.—But the ungodly, (let him that writes weep!—But the ungodly, let him that reads lament!—But the ungodly, let the wretches themſelves flee unto Jeſus) are not ſo; for, while felicity attends the ſaints of God, deſtruction and miſery are in their paths, anguiſh and woe await their latter end. Like the chaff, they have no ſubſtance; and, as the chaff is driven before the wind, ſo, in that day wherein he ſhall thoroughly purge his floor, the tempeſt of his wrath ſhall affright them into an eternity of torment.

VER. 5.—Nor can it be otherwiſe with them, who are not able to ſtand the judgement of the great day, nor are admitted to mingle in the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born.

VER. 6.—For the righteous, walking in Jeſus, who is the new and living way, are approved of God: But the wicked, being continual wanderers among the nations of the unrenewed, ſhall be condemned in their ways, and eternally periſh.

PSALM

PSALM II.

VER. 1.—WHY do the heathen rage againſt religion in every age, and the people imagine wicked, but vain devices?

VER. 2.—How often have fooliſh kings ſet themſelves to this helliſh work! Pharaoh of old endeavours to deſtroy God's Iſrael, and Herod to kill Iſrael's incarnate God; but, in ſpite of the cruel decree, the choſen ſeed increaſes; and in ſpite of the bloody execution, the choſen Saviour eſcapes.

VER. 3.—Yet the irreligious rabble conſult and conclude, "Not the ten commandments of a burning Sinai ſhall awe us, nor the love of a bleeding Saviour conſtrain us, to forſake the pleaſures of ſenſe, and give obedience to the ſceptre of Jeſus."

VER. 4.—But he that ſitteth in the heavens, as in his chair of ſtate, and ſends eternal day from his adorable throne, ſhall contemn their concluſion, and deride their infatuation.

VER. 5.—Behold! they ſhall hear his angry voice, and woe to them that hear it; and ſhall be vexed to their very ſoul, under his burning wrath, and troubled in all their powers, under the weight of his hot diſpleaſure, while he ſhall proclaim to the ends of the earth,

VER. 6.—In ſpite of earth and hell, I have ſet my Son to be my King on my holy hill, there to diſpenſe pardons and ſpiritual bleſſings to all his ſubjects; and let the churches hear his voice, who is the WORD of God, and knows the divine tranſaction of ancient date.

VER.

VER. 7.—I will declare the decree. Innumerable ages before the birth of time, Jehovah, mine eternal Father, said to me, Thou art my well-beloved Son, for, in this unbegun, this never-ending day of eternity, I have begotten thee, by an eternal act of generation, and, therefore, none so fit as thou for the arduous work of man's redemption.

VER. 8.—Since this is the errand on which I send thee, and which thou acceptest, ask of me what thou wilt, and it shall be given. The lawless heathen shall be thine inheritance, and the outmost parts of the earth thy possession. Kingdoms shall trust in thy name, and nations worship before thee.

VER. 9.—Such shall be thine irresistible power, O King! that the enemies of thy throne shall be broken with a rod heavier than the ponderous iron, harder than the northern steel. The fury of thy right-hand shall dash thine inveterate foes to pieces, irreparably, like a potter's vessel.

VER. 10.—Therefore, O kings! now, and not to-morrow, be wise, in obeying the voice of inspiration; and, ye judges, without delay, be instructed not to contend with such an antagonist, not to rush into such an unequal battle.

VER. 11.—But serve Jehovah in the way of his own appointment, not with reluctancy and terror, as a slave; not by starts, and carelessly, as an hireling; but constantly, with reverence and fear, as a son: And while your heart is filled with peace and joy in believing, let an holy awe and dread of the mighty God temper all; doubt not the promise, but beware of presumption; rejoice and triumph in the Saviour, but tremble at sin;

and,

and, while heavenly faith reſts on his all-ſufficiency, let holy fear keep thee always ſelf-diffident.

Ver. 12.—Then yield to the Son the kiſs of obedience; bow to his ſceptre, and believe in his name. To him the world muſt ſubmit, and either be overcome by his grace, or cruſhed by his power. Fly to him, leſt he be angry at your delay, and he ſuffer you to periſh in the very way to heaven, amidſt the offers of the goſpel, and the calls of grace; when his wrath is kindled but a little, how dreadful, then, the uttermoſt of wrath! But, O how bleſſed are they that put their truſt, their unſhaken confidence, in this all-ſufficient Saviour, for peace and pardon, for grace and glory, and every needful good!

EMMA.

EMMANUEL.

A POEM.

EMMANUEL.

A POEM.

GOD, in himſelf above conception bleſt,
Ages before an atom did exiſt,—
Preſent in whoſe omniſcient mind then lay
The great events of vaſt futurity,
The birth of beings, and the riſing train
Of countleſs beauties; (in a comely chain,
Proportion'd and harmonious, all excel,
Worthy the hand that wrought the whole ſo well:)
In grace provided, to reſtore our fall,
A mighty Saviour, ſov'reign Lord of all,
His *ſacred Fellow*, his *anointed One*,
Only-begotten, *well-beloved Son.*

Ah! how his glories ſhall we dare to ſing,
The once abas'd, yet now triumphant King!
Angels are lame the lofty theme to raiſe,
And wond'ring thrones adore in mute amaze;
Dominions own, and ſeraphims confeſs
The theme too high for finite pow'rs t'expreſs:
How, then, ſhall mortal, or the daring pen,
Attempt th' infinite heights of love to ſcan!

Angels themſelves ſure hardly could believe,
That Heav'n to earth, that God to death would give

His darling Son, to ſave rebellious man,—
Man in his ſight leſs than the atom's ſpan,—
Man whom of late from nothing he awoke,
When beauties roſe faſt as he forming ſpoke.

Was the contrivance from eternity?
How vaſt a work then muſt ſalvation be!
Angels confirm'd, and fallen man redeem'd,
And weak creation from the weight exeem'd
Of wrecking ſin: the trembling globe did bend,
Nor long could 'neath the growing mountain ſtand.

Hence learn th' effects of ſin, how dire they are,
That nought but death its ruins could repair,—
The death of none but God, the Son of God!
Which to perform, he left his bleſs'd abode,
And, humbly kind, took part of fleſh and blood.
A God in pangs! Let ev'ry age admire
His tender love, his paſſionate deſire,
To ſave the elect from eternal fire!
The Son implores! the Father hides his face!
Bold ſinners rail, and Hell inſults his caſe!
The Father frowns—frowns on his only Son!
All nature imitates the dreadful frown!
The ſun affords not ev'n one cheering ray
To His laſt pangs who made both ſun and day!
He thirſts—but, lo! the curſe embitters all,
For his laſt cordial's *vinegar* and *gall!*
Redeeming Love! what wonders has it wrought,
Enkindling tranſports, and confounding thought!

The rocks were rent, earth trembled, thunders roar'd,
And teaching darkneſs o'er the world was pour'd,
While

While Jeſus in the lower regions fought
His foes, and their eternal ruin wrought;
And then, victorious, trampling on his foes,
In ſpite of tyrant Death, alive he roſe;
Alive! alive! the ſign of vict'ry won,
While from his tomb back trembling roll'd the ſtone,
Touch'd by the angel's hand that ſat thereon.
Then thunders ceas'd, and all was huſh'd again;
Darkneſs withdrew, and day reſum'd its reign.

Rejoice, Creation, at the glorious ſhow!
But groan in anguiſh, all ye ſhades below!
Infernal pillars, ſtraight a-trembling fall,
And yield to horrors, all ye pow'rs of hell!
Perplex'd, and pain'd with the tormenting thought,
That man's redemption is completely wrought;
Your captive's gone, and your eternal foe
Now mounts his throne, to work the overthrow
Of pow'rs of darkneſs, and to bring to light
The priſoners of everlaſting night.

Death bound in vain; he broke his feeble bands,
And roſe with captives in his conqu'ring hands:
Life's buried Lord rent the calcining deep,
And, as he paſs'd, awoke ſome ſaints from ſleep,
Who, glad t' attend the riſing Lord of day,
In all th' effulgence of divinity,
Sprung from their graves, and were by many a one
Seen, ere receiv'd to everlaſting noon;—
A laſting pillar for delayed hope,
Firſt fruits, to preach the fair approaching crop.

Once, in the lists how doubtful stood the strife,
'Tween death eternal and eternal life!
Foiling the foe, our Conqu'ror seem'd to die,
And, with our hopes, for ever buried lie;
But now the battle's o'er, the vict'ry's won,—
Now saints are sure of their salvation:
Hence, highly let Emmanuel's name be rais'd,
The Author of salvation daily prais'd;
Saints, love the first-begotten rom the dead,
With whom your life in God on high is hid.

The hills' foundations all a-trembling fell,
While he did grapple with the pow'rs of hell;
Death's dark dominions were by him o'erthrown,
And principalities were trodden down;
Then brightly rose, (O memorable way!)
From dismal shades, salvation's joyful day,
Hung round with beams of everlasting light,
Which chase the gloom of sin's substantial night.

Th' attendant hosts adore their Living Head,
Who captive did th' infernal legions lead,
And lock'd (let ages one another tell,
Till angels ring creation's funeral-bell)
The gates of death, the yawning gulph of hell:
Hence, all secur'd, no door upon its hinge
Dare move, and not one damned spirit change
His place in torment, nor the sulph'rous lake
Wave, or its wrathful boiling billows 'wake,
But by his nod; and still the keys he keeps
Of death's dark cavern, and the burning deeps.

Infernal murmurs fill'd the hollow void,
While thro' the grave Redemption conqu'ring rode;

The furies groan'd, grief roſe in every ghoſt *,
For man is ſav'd, and all their labour loſt;
Hopeleſs, they're doom'd to draw their curſed breath,
Deep in the ocean of eternal wrath;
Gnawn by deſpair, and on the racking wheels
Of raging torments, ſpent away in yells;
Yet, (deathleſs death!), ſuſtain'd by pow'rful ire,
Are ever dying, but ſhall ne'er expire,
While God's right-hand has thunder-bolts to ſpend
Upon his foes, in number like the ſand,
Huge as the mountains which eternal ſtand.

The vail is rent, the dreadful diff'rence gone
'Twixt nations who in him are now made one;
A greater diff'rence healed by his blood,—
God reconcil'd to Man, and Man to God;
Hence Love and Juſtice walk ev'n hand in hand,
Mercy and Right'ouſneſs in friendſhip ſtand,
And Peace and Pardon join the glorious band.

Hail, glorious Victor! conqu'ring hell and death,
On whom depends the new creation's breath!
Riſe, and they follow; reign, and they command;
Call, and they come; teach, and they underſtand.

Thus Life aroſe, and, as he conqu'ring paſt
Thro' lower regions, all the graves, aghaſt,
Had at his feet deliver'd up the dead,
Had not his will, had not his love decreed,
That in their tombs they longer ſhould remain,
Till his return with more majeſtic train.
Then ſtraight the gates obedient open fly,
And now we view him mounting up on high.

Hail,

* Evil angels.

Hail, rising Glory! to the thrones above,
For ever henceforth doubly heir of love,—
Eternal love, essentially thine own,
And next the love thou'st by thy suff'rings won.

When forty days he with his friends had staid,
To glad their souls which were so much dismay'd,
To Olive Mount, the often-bless'd repair,
His chosen remnant leads he forth, for there
He first began to taste the wrathful cup,
Which afterwards he, dregs and all, drank up;
'Twas there his boiling blood its streams display'd,
When ev'ry drop some debt to justice paid.
The purple fluid, thick like falling dew,
(Heav'n's mighty hand now strikes th' amazing blow),
Thro' every pore took flight from wrath within;
What, mortal, then, must vengeance be divine?
As there he groan'd 'neath growing agony,
So there in beams broke forth his majesty,
And thence to reign ascended he on high.

From earth our Eagle took his blessed flight,
To brightest beams of everlasting light;
As God's Belov'd, he in God's bosom dwells,
And twice in glory all the heav'ns excels,—
In glory first, essentially his own,
Then in the glories by his vict'ries won.

Now, Judas, with thy bloody Jewish bands,
Betray with kiss where he triumphant stands;
Pursue him, take him, scourge him, nail him fast
Upon the cross, till he breathe out his last!

Ah!

Ah! now his word ſhould make you fall ſupine
Upon deſtruction, ne'er to riſe again.
Now, fainting Peter ſhall no more deny
His Lord, aſcending Conqu'ror thro' the ſky;
Nor the diſciples, tim'rous fawns on flight,
Forſake their captive Maſter in the night.

Now, need they aſk, "Lord, whither goeſt thou?"
He ſolves the queſtion in their very view;
Up thro' the clouds he takes his glorious flight,
And haſtes to regions of eternal light;
Angels attend him to their native ſkies,
While they behold him with adoring eyes,
Till, dazzled with the glory of the ſcene,
The heav'ns receive him, and no more he's ſeen.
Yet faith ſwift follows him to th' uttermoſt,
Till thought, conception, ſoul, and all, are loſt,
Deep in th' incomprehenſible diſplay
Of glore, not known beneath the wings of day.

To ſpicy hills as the bleſt Phœnix flew,
Bright as he paſs'd, the ſtars refulgent grew;
Ne'er ſuch a glorious, ſuch a matchleſs Sun,
Had thro' the circuit of creation run;
Heav'n is enlighten'd with th' augmented blaze,
The joy of ſaints is heighten'd as they gaze
On Chriſt, and view, with joy ineffable,
Two diſtinct natures in one perſon dwell.

High on a throne of glory ſee him plac'd,
With all the grandeur of the Godhead grac'd!
In's hand a ſceptre, on his head is ſet
Th' eternal crown; and, to proclaim him great,

God

God bids the nations homage to him do,
Gives him a name, that at his name ſhould bow
Honour itſelf; and all, with bended knee,
And praiſing tongue, confeſs his deity.

Angels together wing with eagerneſs,
And joy and wonder in their ſongs expreſs,
To ſee their God, their Maker, cloath'd in fleſh;
While round th' eternal throne, with rapture ſtrung,
The diſembodied ſouls, a goodly throng,
With glowing hearts, raiſe high th' exulting ſong,
To Him who ſtill their Brother doth appear;
Sure, unaſham'd, he ſhall their nature wear,
Nor a relation drop, ſo near, ſo dear.

Now the bright SUN, in his meridian height,
Darts forth pure beams of everlaſting light;
While round about fair Zion hill on high,
In ev'ry view, whole heav'ns of glory fly,
And all his holy ones adoring lie.
A hallelujah, where bright heav'ns extend,
Begins to him, unconſcious of an end;
And heav'nly heroes bow th' adoring knee,
With joy beholding his divinity.

How fair and lovely muſt IMMANUEL ſhine!
Divine his perſon, every grace divine!
Of myrrh and caſſia all his garments ſmell,
That fair Arabia's ſweet perfumes excel.
His head ſuſtains a golden crown in ſtate,
With all the ſapphires of perfection ſet;
There rubies, rich in ſacred majeſty,
Around reflect th' aſſimilating ray;

There

There emeralds ſparkle in eternal bloom,
To ſhew his kingdom to no end can come;
There bright carbuncles, like th' unſpotted flame,
Glow with the kindling glories of his name;
There onyx, beryl, amethyſt, are ſet,
And, with united rays, ſparkle Him great.

This crown would cauſe cherubic hoſts expire,
Theſe beams conſume the living flames of fire *,
If to their ſhare this matchleſs ALL were caſt,
So bright, ſo glorious, ſo divine, ſo vaſt.
Then, who can ſing his uncreated might,
Proportion'd to ſupport th' infinite weight
Of glory, pouring in eternal ſtreams,
Eſſential floods, eſſential noon-day beams?

His ſacred head in glory all excels,
In whom the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells;
His hair like wool, his garments like the ſnow,
Pure white, Him in th' eternal annals ſhow
Coeval with Jehovah;—but not old,
If age ſuppoſe decay: His hands do hold
The rolling chain of revolutions ſtill,
And diſcord harmonizes if he will.

His piercing eyes, like the meridian flame,
That lights all heav'n, (but, O! the ſimile's lame),
Strike cherubs blind with their bright burning blaze,
And, at one glance, thro' all creation gaze:
A light divine his fav'ring looks reveal,
But in his frowns ten thouſand torments dwell;
His kindly ſmile an early heav'n diſplays,
But death and hell his killing ire conveys.

His

* The Seraphim.

His ſacred cheeks ten thouſand ſweets diſcloſe,
Where all the beauties of the bluſhing roſe,
And full-blown lilies, the celeſtial dye
Of fair Aurora, mingling ſweet, diſplay.
His ſaints recount their glories with amaze,
And gaze with rapture on the bliſsful blaze;
Such matchleſs beauties in the God-man ſhine,
Angels are captiv'd with the beams divine.

His ruddy lips, like the bright fields of day,
In ev'ry movement majeſty diſplay;
His mighty voice the rolling thunders rends,
Whoſe roaring reaches earth's remoteſt ends:
His voice, (altho' it ſtrike not human ear),
From pole to pole, from heav'n to hell, they hear:
No ſimile thro' the whole can repreſent
The lively ſound, where'er his voice is ſent;
For raging oceans, when their ſhores they beat,
And ſwelling billows thund'ring blows repeat,
Compar'd to this, are ſilent, calm, and quiet.
When in the deluge ſeas forſook their bed,
To ſcale the mountains, and the hills invade;
When beltleſs oceans did tremendous pour
(With ruſhings ſounding to the fartheſt ſhore)
O'er flinty rocks, contemning every bound,
And levell'd cities with the lowly ground;
Tho' nature ev'n ſhould muſter all her pow'r,
Rank ev'ry tempeſt, empty ev'ry ſtore
Of thunders, then let all united roll,
And ſtrike aſtoniſhment from pole to pole;
Yet, to his glorious voice this were no more,
Than ſoft harmonious ſounds when giving o'er,—

Sound

Sounds which, when fled, are never found again;
But, mortal, know he never ſpeaks in vain;
His words are big with being, ev'ry breath
Awakes a world to life, or wraps a world in death.

His ear, capacious as th' expanſe of day,
Hears what ten thouſand worlds or think or ſay;
In vain we ſkulk from his omniſcient ſight,
Darkneſs reveals us, ev'ry ſhade grows light.
Where ſhall we hide then? ah! in vain we fly,
Since ſtill we walk in His meridian ray,
To whom our night ſhines like reſplendent day.

His conqu'ring hands are terrible to ſing,
Upheld by which, the worlds harmonious hang;
The world of nature and the world of grace,
Both in his care and providence have place:
His mighty hands have made the ſhades below
Their conqu'ring pow'r in deepeſt anguiſh know,
And bound ſtrong devils, in thick darkneſs' chain,
Down to the bottom of the burning main:
His ſacred fingers ſcatter'd clouds on high,
And made the day-ſpring to adorn our ſky,
That glorious day, which brought redemption nigh:
They wrought ſalvation, work of wondrous might,
And life's immortal day have brought to light.
His valiant right-hand does a ſceptre hold,—
A righteous ſceptre, form'd of pureſt gold:
With this he rules the worlds above, below,—
Protects the juſt, and lays the rebels low.

Our great High-Prieſt, in heav'n where he appears,
About his breaſt a golden girdle wears;

The curious belt with matchleſs ſkill he wove,
With fineſt threads of everlaſting love:
Yea, on him ere the myſtic zone he ty'd,
In his own blood 'twas ſcarlet-colour dy'd.
In this fair zone are blue and purple plac'd,
With all the ſweetneſs of ſalvation grac'd.

Down to his feet a glorious garment goes,
Where, waving wide, it covers all his toes;
This all his members, ſaints of ev'ry name,
Put on, fair cov'ring, that conceals their ſhame;
For in the Robe of his own right'ouſneſs,
Our Elder Brother wraps each babe of grace.

His thighs and legs, like marble pillars high,
Shew forth the glory of his majeſty,
And tell his ſtatutes, ſecret or made known,
Eternally ſhall flouriſh in renown,
Not like men's laws, by waſting time o'erthrown.
His ſacred counſels, firmer than the rocks,
Or maſſive mountains, ſcorn th' unnumber'd ſhocks
Of ſtorms and whirlwinds where poor mortals dwell,
And ſtand for ever, maugre earth and hell.

His feet appear as fineſt braſs on fire,
Woe's them on whom he tramples in his ire;
All nature 'neath his ſteps would ſoon expire;
The ſolid earth at laſt muſt blaze in flame,
When his deſcending feet but touch the ſame.

Since in each member ſuch dread glories meet,
In ev'ry glory majeſty ſo great,
How muſt his comely countenance appear!
Tremendous, glorious, amiable, fair!

As

As ſheds the noon-day ſun, when heav'ns are bright,
On baſking worlds unbounded floods of light,
So ſhines Emmanuel, from his throne on high,
On ſp'rits angelic, ſtars of th' upper ſky;
For all enjoy his vivifying ray,
And light their beams at the bright Source of day.

Thus reigns the Sov'reign of th' angelic race,
O Man! thy Friend, and full of truth and grace;
Hence wonders riſe, that ſuch an One indeed
Should for his people deign to intercede,
And with his Father for their welfare plead.
See, 'fore the throne our Interceſſor ſtand,
A golden cenſer holding in his hand;
From th' holy veſſel clouds of incenſe riſe,
And ſpread their odours through the ſpacious ſkies.
The pray'rs of ſaints, accepted as his own,
Mount with the incenſe to the higheſt throne.
To God, thro' him, ſwift as their pray'rs aſcend,
Swift, anſwers kind from God, through him, deſcend.
On earth a ſaint offends; then Juſtice wakes,
To thunder wrath;—the Interceſſor ſpeaks,
Stills roaring vengeance, calms the frowns of God,
And pleads the merits of his death and blood:
Thus for his ſake the Father ſpares his own,
Forgives their failings, pours rich pardon down,
Reſtores their ſouls with freſh ſupplies of grace,
And looks on them in his Anointed's face.

Nor doubt but to the Father he is gone,
For us appears, and pleads before the throne;
The Spirit came, commiſſion'd from above,
Imparts the tokens of redeeming love,

And guides the weary trav'ller in the way
That leads him home to the bleſs'd realms of day.

High on the right of the tremendous throne,
He ſits in ſtate; there the exalted One
Holds in his hand a roll of needy names,
On grace, not merit, building all their claims;
They, full of hope, to him their cauſe commit,
Who, kind, and for the work completely fit,
Employs his ſkill, nor labours e'er in vain,
All bleſſings for his ranſom'd to obtain.
He in our nature now on high appears,
And him, well pleas'd, the Father always hears;
There, in our room and for our ſake, he pleads,
He pleads his merit while he intercedes,
And ſtill his heart in melting pity bleeds.

The ſaints' beſt Friend is far before them gone,
Preparing manſions bleſſed for each one,
And will, ere long, return in majeſty,
That where he is, there may his ſervants be.
Their elder Brother, in their name above,
Has ta'en poſſeſſion of the throne; hence love
Divine on them conſpicuous ſhines, and they
Believe the bleſſings of unbounded day
Are their's, as ſure as Faithfulneſs can ſeal,
Or Truth confirm, a Truth that cannot fail.

No gift on earth can gain his gracious ear,
Nor ſaints departed hand to him a pray'r.
Tho' round the throne adoring angels ſtand,
And ſaints and ſeraphs, in a glorious band,

Yet

Yet none of theſe the title dare aſſume
Of Interceſſor, to avert the doom
From ſinning mortals, or cauſe bleſſings come
On needy mankind; for He only bears
The title Interceſſor, whoſe kind ears
From ſaints' own mouth receive their fervent pray'rs.

Our hidden groans, our ſecret agonies,
When language fails us, pierce the higheſt ſkies,
And quickly come before the gracious throne,
Where, tho' exalted, he o'erlooks not one,
But reads the plaint, and, full of grace, lays by
The bill, till Love ſend down a kind reply:
He numbers all the broken-hearted groans
Of ſaints; he marks th' innumerable moans
Of Zion's friends, regarding all their pray'rs,
Their wand'rings counts, and bottles up their tears.
He pleads our cauſe, when we, poor ſlothful we,
Forget ourſelves, tho' drown'd in miſery;
And will continue till the thrones ſhall fall,
And the dread fiery Throne be ſet, where ſhall
The nations be aſſembled, one and all.

Now the grand period, the laſt day, is come,
When God's great fam'ly ſhall be gather'd home:—
The awful thunders now prepare to roar—
Such thunders as were never heard before;
All heav'n's one thunder-clap from ev'ry wind,
And ſtrikes with dread the whole of human kind;
The beauteous ſky, the curtain of the day,
From eaſt to weſt furls up in deep diſmay;
Then fiery ſtreams, from heav'n, not ſeen before,
Impetuous roll, and pave his march with glore;

While the eternal King comes on behind,
With glory too divine to be defin'd.

The courſe of nature ſpeeds to be unſpun,
From floating atoms to the fixed ſun;
Her wheels give way, the globes a-ſhaking fall,
And each forgets the centre of his ball;
From inmoſt heav'ns inceſſant flaſhes fly,
While men, amaz'd, ſtare at the troubled ſky:
The day is girt with horrors of the night,
And light itſelf ev'n ceaſes to give light.
Confuſion, jarring, ſpreads from pole to pole,
And diſſolution ſeizes on the whole.
All nature ſuffers, and the pathos far
Spreads, (nor can diſtance the dread tremor bar),
From midmoſt centre to the fartheſt ſtar;
Yea, not a wand'ring atom in the way,
But feels th' approach of this tremendous day.
The hills, unfix'd, their baſes now forſake,
The mighty mountains to their centres ſhake,
And rocks, that ſcorn'd the billow's frequent daſh,
With dread concuſſion 'gainſt each other craſh;
Old Ocean bears no more the wand'ring keels,
The waters yield before the flying iſles:—
For now in heav'n begins to dawn the day,
When God the Father to the Son ſhall ſay,
"This is the day which was in our decree,
Appointed to bring in eternity:
Now, Son belov'd, plac'd on thy royal throne,
Deſcend in all my glory and thine own:
Mine angels, joyful, on thy throne ſhall wait,
Thy Godhead own, and tend their Lord in ſtate.

Go,

Go, in my name and majeſty appear;
Thee ſhall the world affrighted trembling fear.
Sole Judge, accept, reject, acquit or caſt,
None ever ſhall repeal thy ſentence paſt."

The liſt'ning millions, with harmonious ſound
Of rapt'rous praiſe who the dread throne ſurround,
While the Eternal ſpeaks, with joy elate,
In ſolemn ſilence the great iſſue wait,
Till the unveiling of the ſecret's giv'n,
(A ſecret which till now lay hid in heav'n);
Then they renewed hallelujahs ſing,
Triumphing in th' all-conqu'ring Judge and King.

The throne removes; and with an awful ſhout
Th' attending hoſts the heavens ſhake throughout;
While in concert celeſtial arches ring,
And echo to the rapt'rous notes they ſing.

The heav'ns divide, and the eternal gates
Of glory open, while loud thunder waits
The march of God thro' each recoiling ſphere,
And, by command, God's mighty hoſts are there;
All heav'n is emptied, (none remains behind),
T' attend that Lord, who once by ev'ry friend
Was left on earth! true, one old friend appear'd,
(Or ſervant rather), and his Sov'reign cheer'd,
Whoſe agoniſed ſoul diſſolv'd within,
Like wax, when, mortal, ſuff'ring for thy ſin.

The ſparkling ſtars pave the illumin'd way,
And heav'n looks fairer in th' approaching ray;

Rev'rence

Rev'rence on ev'ry brow angelic bends,
And Majeſty in ſacred pomp attends;
Sacred the van, auguſt the glorious rear;
Chriſt and his fiery chariots now appear,
Whoſe numbers twenty thouſand are——
——But now
Look round, my muſe, and take a fearful view
Of earth, and ſee their diſmal ſtate below,
Where nothing is but mourning, anguiſh, woe.
The ſun, outſhone, far, far before him flies,
And in his flight 'midſt ſick'ning beams he dies;
Nature's in her ſtrong pillars wounded ſore,
The ſun grows dark, the moon is dim with gore;
Dependent planets loſe their gleams in night;
And diſtant ſuns, if ſuch, ſtart out of ſight;
Stars diſappear as the bright morning Star
Shines glorious, in eſſential beams, from far.

The dry land now, and ſeas which lave each ſhore,
Yea, heav'n's tall pillars which ne'er bow'd before,
And proudeſt monuments of earthly pow'r,
Are all diſmay'd at Heav'n's deciſive hour,
Who opens all his magazines of woe,
And makes his rock-dividing winds to blow.
The rending thunders ſpread from pole to pole,
Strike ev'ry ear, and ſeize on ev'ry ſoul.
All ether kindles in a fearful flame,
The harbinger of his tremendous name,
Who comes to be aveng'd on thee, O Sin!
On thee, O ſinner! as thy deeds have been.
The rattling thunders give all nature pain,
Expiring nature can't their peals ſuſtain;

The

The mighty cedars mightier thunders tear,
And in a moment make the foreſts bare.
Such dreadful claps abroad the thunders ſend,
That in her pangs expires the calving hind;
No muſic in the late melodious air,
No Philomel, nor warbling ſongſter there.

The death-paw'd lions now forget to roar,
Whoſe yelling ſet the woods a-trembling o'er;
And tigers, into tameneſs terrified,
(A tameneſs mingling with the purple tide),
Forbear to tear, to trouble, or affright,
Yea, harmleſs, mix with lambkins in their flight,
Which, trembling, ſeek the neighb'ring thicket's ſhade,
But thickets quake, and foreſts nod with dread.

Hot thunder-bolts break dreadful on the rocks,
And rend their flinty ſides with fiery ſhocks:
Earth trembles to her centre; earth again
Receives new ſhocks, and trembling doth remain;
The yawning valleys ſever'd are below,
The forces of th' affrighted ocean flow
Together, toſſed from their tumbling bed:
As when, in fair Creation's day, they fled
The riſing mountain and the ſpreading plain,
Till, ſtopp'd by pow'r, they form'd the foaming main.
Earth, ſeas, and ſun, yea, all beneath his throne,
Concern'd in this great ſcene, look anxious on:
Centre, that ſlept in undiſturbed bed
For many ages, heaves his hoary head
In hideous groans, while earthquakes round him roar;
Then burſts the world, as clouds their thunders pour;

This,

This, mingling in the combat of the ſky,
Sums up and crowns the laſt cataſtrophe.

The Judge appears, at whoſe tremendous look
The heav'ns diſſolve, the earth is terror-ſtruck;
All glory fades in the approaching beams
Of Beauty, and in the o'erflowing ſtreams
Of Love and Life, Grace, Majeſty, and Pow'r,
Finite perfections ceaſe, and ſhine no more:—
As lamps, if lighted in the noon-day ray,
Look pale, and periſh 'midſt the beams of day.

The daring atheiſts, who a God deny,
Shall tremble when they ſee him in the ſky,
And wiſh their thoughts were true, but wiſh in vain,
Taught there's a God, by anguiſh from within.

An awful ſign of the laſt day in heav'n,
Is by th' Almighty's condeſcenſion giv'n,—
The ſign that ſhews the Son of man at hand,
Shall ſtrike aſtoniſh'd ſeas, and trembling land,
More fearfully than fore-runners of death,
Or direful preludes of impending wrath
On finiſh'd monarchies, empires, and thrones,
Or ſcatter'd tribes, curs'd to the diſtant zones *.
From pole to pole the prodigy ſhall ſhow,
(While millions view, and wring their hands in woe),
Ev'n tell them, that th' exalted Son of man
Comes now commiſſion'd with the glorious plan,
By which he'll judge the num'rous human race,
And nations ſoon ſhall ſee him face to face.

Now

* Joſephus, the Jewiſh hiſtorian, relates, that many wonderful appearances were ſeen in Jeruſalem, immediately before the diſperſion of that devoted nation.

Now he deſcends, and far before him goes
A glorious flame, the terror of his foes;
The mountain-tops it kindles, and on fire
Sets tow'ring hills, which to the heav'ns aſpire.
The mountains melt, the waſting flame extends
(Tremendous blaze!) to earth's remoteſt ends.
All pleaſures periſh, all delights are loſt,
And wailing tribes with terror great are toſt;
The world's an Egypt, darkneſs ev'ry where,
No Goſhen now, no land of light is there.
Such is the fruit of ſin, (thrice curſed ſpawn!)
Which early, in the young creation's dawn,
Slew innocence, and did ſo darken day,
That clouds of vengeance cover'd all the ſky,
Till Jeſus, by obedience unto death,
Appeaſing Juſtice, ranſoming from wrath,
Made morning innocence with ſplendour ſpring,
And day celeſtial ſtretch th' eternal wing;
Thus all is darkneſs till his throne appear,
Then brighter lights are ſcatter'd ev'ry where.

Now earth's a ſeat, a ſcene of miſeries,
Which are re-echo'd from the troubled ſeas;
Great earthquakes ſhake the deep-ſunk ſeats of hills,
The tumbling mount the gaping valley fills;
Large chaſms men's flight forbid, before, behind;
Without earth opens, and within the mind
Is rent with terrors, that the human kind
Would death to life prefer; yet death does fly
Their eager wiſh.——
Now he approaches nigh
In majeſty divine; th' etherial throng
Is all one concert of celeſtial ſong.

Now

Now ſkies grow clear, and heav'ns again look bright,
Replete with beams of pure and ſpotleſs light.
Nature's convinc'd her Maker means no ill,
But mankind, guilty mankind, tremble ſtill.
Glory, in boundleſs beams, before him flies,
And pours a ſplendour thro' th' expanded ſkies.
A brighter day than ever ſhone before,
At his approach, its golden beams darts o'er
Th' expectant world;—heav'n in its beauty blooms
On ſaints, but midnight on the guilty glooms.

At his command both heav'n and earth are ſcroll'd
Together, and his glorious throne is roll'd
On flaming wheels; and, while approaching nigh,
Ten thouſand choirs begin the harmony
Of triumph, and ten thouſand angels ſtand
On ev'ry ſide, all waiting his command.

The Seraphs, flying on out-ſtretched wings,
And beating joy on all their warbling ſtrings,
A ſapphire pavement bear beneath his feet,
On which his throne, in majeſty, is ſet.
An arch of glory bends about his head;
Above his throne the beauteous bow is ſpread,
The certain ſign and witneſs plac'd above,
That God and man are reconcil'd in love.
What peaceful beams does this fair bow diſplay!
(Saints gaze with joy, and ev'ry heart grows gay);
What rapture ſwells to find the deluge gone,
And that a cloud ſhall never hide his throne!

The God of glory comes, all heav'ns deſcend,
Angels, *Archangels*, *Thrones*, and *Pow'rs* attend;

Cherub

Cherub and *Seraph* in the train combine,
And all the hoſts march on in pomp divine.
The elect ſouls, who dwelt in glory's land,
Flying obedient to his lov'd command,
Come down their duſt (reſign'd ſo long before)
To re-aſſume, to be disjoin'd no more.

The clouds, transform'd to light, together fly,
(No more black clouds ſhall dark'ning veil the ſky),
To uſher in th' eternal Lord of light,
Yet from the wicked hide the glorious ſight:
They ne'er ſhall ſee his reconciled face,
Who ſcorn'd on earth to hear his words of grace;
But ſee him ſoon they ſhall, in vengeance dread,
And hear his thunders thro' thick darkneſs ſpread.
A mighty angel in his train appears,
Who the tremendous trumpet with him bears:
The throne is ſet, round which a wall of fire
Waves high, encircling all the glorious choir.

Now the archangel, with a humble bow,
Stands forth, aloud to ſound the trump, and now
In ſilence huſh'd, with mingled joy and fear,
The glorious choir the trumpet wait to hear.

He blows;—anon the ſlumb'ring world obeys;
Come forth, ye dead!—anon the dead ariſe.
The voice of the Eternal alſo ſhakes
Death's ſilent cells, and all the dead awakes;
Angels exulting give a joyful ſhout,
And with their ſongs re-echo heav'ns throughout.

As lightnings oft, in ſummer's hotteſt day,
Dart on a wretch, and force his ſoul away;—

So ſheets of livid flame from the bright throne,
Infold ſurviving nations ev'ry one,
And change, in the ſhort twinkling of an eye,
Their mortal frames to immortality;
And thus, while waiting their deciſive doom,
They mix with thoſe diſgorging from the tomb;
For now the tombs diſcloſe, the grave gives way,
And life abounds where tribes of mortals lay;
In fields the frequent ſcene of bloody ſtrife,
Armies of men at once ſpring forth to life;
They dy'd in war, but riſe in peace again,
Their ruſt-ſheath'd ſwords behind at reſt remain.
Obedient waves throw, with tremendous pow'r,
Old Ocean's pris'ners on the much-throng'd ſhore:
Thus earth, ſeas, death, and hell, give up their prey;
For Pow'r divine all nature muſt obey.

Now, quick as lightning, in a moment fly
To ev'ry corner of th' amazed ſky,
Millions of angels on out-ſtretched wing,
And ſoon together all God's ſaints they bring.
Meanwhile on high a ſpacious plain is ſpread,
Form'd of blue ether, for the happy dead;
There they will hear each ſentence from the throne,
Give their aſſent, and glad receive their own.

Firſt riſe the juſt, and raviſh'd are to ſee
Their Saviour ſeated in ſuch majeſty;
They raiſe their raptur'd eyes with freſh delight,
To ſee him glorious in the nations' fight;
And while he ſheds his glories round about,
Exulting millions to their Jesus ſhout:

"Is

"Is that the Man whom men did once deſpiſe,
Whoſe glory now illumines all the ſkies?
Is that th' offender who before the bar
Of Pilate ſtood, whom now the nations fear?
Is that the meek, the lowly, humble Lord,
Now in a manner ſo divine ador'd?
Can this be He that once was left alone,
In whoſe bright train heav'n's armies follow on,
And whom ten thouſand angels wait upon?"
But while they raiſe their joyful ſongs on high,
Becauſe their dear redemption draweth nigh,
Angels commiſſion'd lay on them their hand,
As once on Lot, when he did ling'ring ſtand
In Sodom, and before the throne them bring
Into the preſence of their Lord and King.

Next riſe the wicked, who, when they appear,
Reluctant riſe, and fill'd with black deſpair;
Conſcience awak'd, with angry looks ſhall ſtorm,
And gnaw them with its never-dying worm;
Yea, death and hell are in their looks each one,
While, tho' averſe, they view the awful throne.

Fiends ready ſtand at their diſgorging grave,
(Sinners and Satan a ſad meeting have),
To drag and fiſt them 'fore the flaming bar,
And joy the more how fierce their torments are;
Glad God's own works ſhould God's great arm defy,
Then be condemn'd in burning lakes to lie,
And there blaſpheme him thro' eternity.

Now tremble, ſinner! this belongs to you,
And ſacred truth declares the ſcene is true;

Rejoice and tremble,—tremble ſtill, and run
Unto th' incarnate God, Jehovah's Son,
Thy Saviour, ſoul! and there by faith remain,
So at this day to Him thou ſhalt pertain;
Then angels ſhall take care of thee, yea, thou,
Fearleſs, ſhalt theſe tranſactions fully view.

Now round the throne bright enſigns pow'r diſplay,
And glorious banners, waving ev'ry way,
With brighteſt colours, like th' unclouded ſky,
Reflect the beauties of eternal day;
While holds th' enthroned Judge in his right-hand,
A flag, amidſt diſplayed banners grand,
Fearful in height, dreadful in majeſty,
Which th' hindmoſt rears of worlds awaken'd ſee:
There all the beauties of the rain-bow play,
And glories of the early dawn of day,
Join'd with the ſweetneſs of the ſetting ſky;
There Heav'n's diſplay'd in matchleſs majeſty.

Now doth his voice, like the loud thunder, roar,—
His real voice, which tribes ne'er heard before;
Straight devils tremble, hell's afreſh inflam'd,
And new-awaken'd tortures ſeize the damn'd.
But to his own the oppoſite appears,
Who, at his voice, are diſpoſſeſs'd of fears;
Deſpair into its darkeſt dungeon leaps,
And Trembling to its ſhaken centre creeps,
To vex no more.—Sereneſt peace is ſpread,
And Love, exulting, lifts th' immortal head,
(The crowning grace), to get the crown divine;
The brighteſt grace below, above ſhall brighteſt ſhine.

Diſtant,

Diſtant, like ſorrow, from the ſeats of bliſs,
From the fair throne ſtands all th' accurſed race,
Who, trembling, wait their doubly-dreadful dooms,
While gnawing worms awake, and conſcience glooms.
Their rolling eyes are redden'd with revenge;
Their countenance ten thouſand horrors change;
And on their blacken'd brow ſits deep deſpair,
While inward beats their heart with boundleſs fear;
'Midſt tort'ring thoughts convuls'd, and torn in twain;
Anxious to be in that ſame ſtate again,
When not awak'd a ſoul, 'twas free from all
That mortals duty, fear, and paſſion call.

Then kings unknown among their ſubjects are;
Their ſervants eye them with revereleſs ſtare;
And prince and peaſant equal honours ſhare.
Then the fair face, which mortals here admire,
With ghaſtly looks, ſheds horror ev'ry where;
Nought's beauteous but the right'ouſneſs of ſaints;
Then, happy they whom Heav'n this glory grants.

How do they turn to either hand, with hope,
That ſomething may the Judge's glances ſtop;
But ſtill his looks, quick as th' enlight'ning ray,
Where'er they turn, ſtraight in their faces fly;
Yea, thro' the ſtrong, the brazen bars they enter,
And pierce into their ſoul's confuſed centre.

Now, the dread Judge of all looks angry down
From his tremendous throne, and at his frown
The hearts of his mad foes within them fail,
While wildly their ſad caſe they thus bewail:

" Soul, ceaſe t'exiſt!—alas! it will not do;
I live to bear eternal loads of woe.
My being, like the adamantine rock,
Muſt, waſteleſs, ſtand his angry thunder's ſhock,—
Shocks, which would melt the flinty maſs away,
And wrap in darkneſs the meridian ray.
My moments fled, can I not fetch again?
Is there no way t' eſcape perpetual pain?
Might I not hide in ſome eternal ſhade?
Ah! ſhadows fly, and all with light is clad.
See! light prevails; my ſoul's the darkeſt cell,
Where vengeance hot blows up a burning hell.
Why did the grave refuſe to let me reſt?
The cruel tomb from its kind chambers caſt?
O! falling mountains, let me to you fly,
And in your ruins loſt for ever lie.
O! tumbling rocks, let your laſt overthrow,
And pond'rous weight, for ever ſink me low.
Beneath your bottoms fain would I abide,
But what from his omniſcient eye can hide?
Nor height, nor depth, nor darkneſs, nor the grave,
I'm ſought—I'm found—and, quite demented, rave
With terrors, teeming from th' incenſed throne,
In bankleſs ſtreams, which never ſhall be gone;
Henceforth no covert can my caſe avail,
While kindling conſcience does attend me ſtill,
And in my breaſt blows up the hotteſt hell.
Where ſhall I look? to whom complain? or fly?
If to the Throne, there reigns mine enemy:
If round about, all, in concert of woe,
The deepeſt ſenſe of direſt anguiſh ſhow.
No pity!——ſee the Judge in ſpreading flame!
His looks accuſe, his countenance condemn:

My

My ſentence paſſes——Oh! eternity!
My doom is fix'd, to fix my miſery.
I ſwoon;——
——Alas! am I awak'd again?
In ev'ry pow'r t' endure eternal pain.
Is this the fruit of golden-coloured ſin?
Like Sodom's apples, poiſonous within!
Muſt I, for taſting Pleaſure's paſſing ſtream,
Drink boiling oceans, wrathful to the brim?
Oh! now, what fearful agonies I feel,
Who muſt, with furies chain'd, for ever dwell
In the moſt dark and diſmal place of hell.
Lo! I lament, but now, alas! too late,
My loſs beyond relief, my wretched ſtate.
Oh! wherefore was it fix'd in Heav'n's decree,
That law, and ſin, and death, and hell, ſhould be?
For had the univerſe in nothing lain,
I had not been, to ſuffer for my ſin.
Long I deſpis'd the ſoul-redeeming ONE,
Whom now I dread upon yon glorious throne;
Yea, laugh'd at thoſe who did inſtructions give,
And liv'd like one that nothing did believe.
Deſpair'd, diſtracted, all remeed is loſt;
Condemn'd to ſuffer to the uttermoſt.
I can't repent, I feel,——it muſt be ſo;
Come then, Almighty Judge, thy will to do,
Curſe me to th' centre of eternal woe,
Who was, who am, who ſtill ſhall be thy foe;
Spare not to puniſh,—puniſh till I die,
For while I live, I ſhall blaſpheming lie.—
Oh! could I but incenſe his kindled ire,
To cauſe my frail exiſtence' ſpark expire.

Now

Now Heav'n's keen arrows round about me light,
Unequal forces, yet eternal fight.
While God is God, I muſt endure his wrath,
His fierceſt wrath; O could it end in death!
But, curs'd with being, I relentleſs lie,
Fuel for vengeance thro' eternity;
Deep to the centre of eternal fire,
I'm daſh'd with burning thunderbolts of ire.
Now hell begins without, within, and I,
Set all on flame, in hotteſt burnings lie;
Longer than thought its troubled ſelf can ſtretch,
Or my conception (O ſad ſtate!) can reach."

Earth's rich poſſeſſors, who in grandeur go,
Think little now upon theſe ſcenes of woe;
Or, as they read, ſay, Soul, ſhalt thou be here
An heir of glory, or a child of fear?
Sharing the triumphs of eternal day,
Or ſent, with fiends and damned ſouls, away?

Fly, mortal, fly, faſt from the wrath to come;
Beneath blood's covert ſhun the threaten'd doom;
For the long-gath'ring thunders ſurely ſhall
With fury break on unbelievers all.

But now, the glorious ſcene proceeds, and, lo!
The books are open'd, and another throw
Of killing pangs the wicked undergo.
In open folio, each within his hand
The Book of Conſcience holds, where marked ſtand
Ten thouſand, thouſand, thouſand faults forgot;
Which faint impreſſions feeble mem'ry wrote,
Not caring if they could be read or not.

But

But then dark characters grow bright again,
Then ev'ry jota ſtraight appeareth plain.
Before the Judge, at the tremendous bar,
The books, for men and devils, open'd are.
In one, what Satan and th' infernal train,
Againſt the woman have deviſ'd in vain,
And all her ſeed, attempting oft to tear
The ſtately fabric of ſalvation fair;
They have fill'd up the meaſure of their ſin,
And devils now are judg'd as well as men.
Then, ſaint! what ſnares ſoever Satan lay
For thee, ſhall juſtice at this day repay;
Thoſe black ſuggeſtions he ſo fly caſts in,
Thou know'ſt not whence, without or from within,
On his own head ſhall be return'd again;
His ſtrong temptations, at the laſt, ſhall ſwell
His puniſhment, and ſev'n times heat his hell.

The Judge proceeds,—and high on his right-hand,
A crowd of kings, a throng of princes ſtand;
And ſons of conqueſt ſongs of triumph ſing,
Celeſtial tranſports touching ev'ry ſtring.
" This is our God! behold, he's come, and we
Shall dwell with him to all eternity.
Love found us, when from him we wand'ring ſtray'd;
Love rais'd us when we in our graves were laid;
Now we're awak'd, awak'd to ſleep no more,
But to partake of his eternal glore.
This is our God, and hence we draw our heav'n,
Our Judge, our Friend, by whom we are forgiv'n.
Our ſtation tells that we are his belov'd,
Our place declares of him we are approv'd;
On his right hand, (O! higheſt dignity!),
So ſhall we ſit, and ſing eternally.

Now

Now we behold the mourning crowds below,
Who gnaſh their teeth in anguiſh, horror, woe;
Our Lord is ours, and we are his, our all
Is in our ſight, our ſoul, and ever ſhall."
Now to the ſaints the Judge his glorious eyes
Doth turn, (a heav'n in the fair glances flies),
And while he ſpeaks, all's huſh'd into ſurpriſe.
" Come, come, ye bleſſed of my Father, come,
Inherit now your kingdom and your home,
Which, from the time the pillars were prepar'd,
On which the world was, with its fulneſs, rear'd,
Was kept for you, for you, whoſe care I felt,
When I 'mong you, dear ones, diſtreſſed dwelt."
When saw we thee afflicted any how,
That we to thee could any kindness shew?
The ſaints reply. But then the Judge goes on,
" I count it mine what's to my members done;
When I impriſon'd in a martyr lay,
You, unaſham'd, did many a viſit pay.
In ſacred truth you did their ſteps conduct,
Strengthen'd by which, unto my cauſe they ſtuck.
For all my martyrs you lamented much,
And for them ſtill your ſympathy was ſuch,
That you their agoniſing pains did touch.
You cloth'd the godly from the winter-ſnow,
And would not let my members naked go.
When foreign lands my ſervants did receive,
Who in their own nor peace nor truth could have;
You took them in, as would a tender mother,
And entertain'd as they had been your brother;
Ever on them you caſt your caring eyes,
Ever on them, in their neceſſities,
Your plenty pour'd, with pitying ſympathy,
And ſtill the cauſe was, *They belong'd to me.*

Therefore

Therefore, again, ye righteous, come, and ſhare
My love, my joy, what glorious bleſſings are
Mine, hence are yours, without the leaſt annoy,
Ye ſhall my fulneſs, ev'n myſelf, enjoy."
The ſaints the ſentence with a humble bow
Receive, and all their raptur'd paſſions glow
To Him that crowns them with ſeraphic love,
And raiſes them to reign as kings above.

Eternal joys take up their reſting-place
Within their ſouls, and heav'n and paradiſe
Diſplay their own before their raviſh'd eyes.
As the bleſs'd ſentence paſſes on the juſt,
The angels are diſcharged of their truſt,
And ſpread for ſaints no more the willing wing;
No more to earth ſhall Heav'n's grand meſſage bring;
From angels praiſe is only Heav'n's demand,
And ſhouting ſaints among the numbers ſtand.

Now downward caſts the Judge his angry eyes,
Whence vengeance ſwift, with winged fury, flies.
Foretaſtes of hell! His awful looks do make
The crowds to tremble, ev'ry ſoul to quake;
And, as he ſpeaks, all ſink into deſpair:
"Ye curs'd, depart from me t' eternal fire;
When I among you, poor and pris'ner lay,
You knew not me, did not one viſit pay;
A ſtranger, yet ye would not let me ſtay;
I hungry, thirſty, naked too did go,
And ſick, but you did me no kindneſs ſhow."
"We never ſaw thee ſo, or, we proteſt,
Lord, we had entertain'd thee with the beſt
Of all things; yea, our very bowels ſhould,
Spun into clothing, ſcreen'd thee from the cold.

A pris'ner, Lord? and likewiſe in our day?
Yet we to thee one viſit never pay?
No, ſurely it has not been in our time,
Or let us bear eternally the blame;
Yea, we to thee had crept on hands and feet;
Then think not ſo—thy mercy we intreat."
" Ye hypocrites, (the Judge replies in wrath),
Witneſs my ſaints, whom ye purſu'd to death;
For, as in all their ſtripes you wounded me,
So in their death I was condemn'd to die;
Therefore you ſhall, doom'd to eternal fire,
Feel all the fury of my burning ire,
As far as finite can, and not expire.
Dread floods of vengeance ſhall on you deſcend,
And boiling torrents, ignorant of end;
Cruſh'd with the blows of mine uplifted hand,
As long as the eternal throne ſhall ſtand,
You ſhall bewail your everlaſting woe,
But find no kindly comforter below."

But hold, my Muſe, nor, curious, dare to dive
In Heav'n's deep ſecrets; rather ſuch believe.
The great aſſize, the judgement ſtill goes on,
Unutterable ſcene, unheard, unknown!
Heathens and Chriſtians their laſt ſentence get,
Appointing them to their eternal ſtate.
Empires paſs judg'd; ages, and tribes of men,—
Churches, courts, kingdoms!———
———Now the glorious ſcene
Is over;—now the world's great doom is ſpoke
Unalterable;—now the final ſtroke
His foes receive from his all-conqu'ring hand,
And, vengeance-ſtruck, before him trembling ſtand.

The

The curſed crowds burſt out in bellowing pain,
Blaſpheme, exclaim, bewail, but all in vain;
Shrieks dwell on ev'ry tongue, and fill the air;
Pangs, horror, anguiſh, conſcience-ſhouts, deſpair,
Spread in each breathing, grow in ev'ry groan;
From them for ever hope and heav'n are gone.
Could pity glow now in a glorious breaſt,
With pity ſaints and angels were impreſs'd,
To hear their bitter wailings, which begun,
Shall know no bound,—to hear their melting moan
Of God departed, of the burning flame,
The gnawing worm, and anguiſh to extreme,
Filling their fixed ſtate:—O killing thought!
Their pangs ne'er to an end are nearer brought.
When thought is tir'd with ſtretching far into
Life's maze, life's circle, yet, beyond the view
Of angels, ſtill the dread duration lies,
The given time for all their miſeries.

Fires thund'ring teem from heav'n, and earth below
Burſts out in flames, till flames together flow;
The elements themſelves diſſolve away
With fervent heat, at Heav'n's deciſive day;
Fire rends the world, furls in th' expanded heav'n,
To whoſe conſuming pow'r all things are giv'n;
Yea, ſtars and planets wholly ignify,
And heav'n and earth emboſom'd burnings lie.
Cities and caſtles ſink, once of great name,
And kingdoms vaniſh 'fore the conqu'ring flame.
Now is the world one fire, one boundleſs blaze;
The ocean boils,—hills ſink,—and mountains raiſe
Their heads no more!—O pow'r! of awful praiſe!

But pauſe, my Muſe! 'tis no nocturnal dream,
Whoſe phantoms fly, quick as th' awak'ning beam
Darts on the eye, whoſe pleaſure or whoſe pain
Scarce ſome reflecting moments do retain :—
The ſcene, however terrible, is true,—
However ſhocking, ev'ry eye muſt view;
Men, angels, devils—all aſſembled are,
(For ev'ry ſon of being muſt be there),
To meet with God, to get their final doom;
The day, tho' long delay'd, at laſt will come.
O think how ſhocking ſhall ſuch awful ſights
Appear, when nature her own fun'ral lights!
How hot the furnace, and how fierce the fires,
That burn the filth of many thouſand years!
For all creation groans with ſin till now,
And trav'lling in her pangs for birth doth bow;
But then the creature ſhall deliver'd be,
(So long ſubjected unto vanity),
From ponderous corruption's preſſing load,
To th' glorious liberty of ſons of God.
Beyond the wreck, behold the wiſhful view;
Old things ſhall paſs, and ev'ry thing grow new:
So has He ſaid who ſits upon the throne,—
So He has ſaid, and He will ſee it done.

Fair from the flames the heav'ns in beauty ſpread,
And ſpotleſs glories round creation ſhed;
Stars ſparkle brighter, and th' unclouded ſun
Outſhines the ſplendour of all ages run;
The world's great caverns purg'd, and grottos hid,
Earthquakes no more burſt from their ſulph'rous bed;
Mounts riſe refin'd, valleys are purify'd,
And gales ſanif'rous fan the flow'ry mead;

The

The ſweeping tempeſts wear th' eternal chain,
And oceans, once tumultuous, reſt ſerene.
Ocean, the emblem of our fleeting woes,
Sleeps on, and now the ſea of trouble flows
And ebbs no more;—all's wrapt up in repoſe.
The fields are ſpread with everlaſting green,
And floods of innocence o'erflow the plain.

As th' elect of redeeming love endure
A monument, ſo of creating pow'r
The heav'ns and earth;—and thus the Lord's always
The God of nature and the God of grace.

The Judge commands, and now the ſatiate flame
Furls up itſelf, as if become more tame;
Then by his word fires from the world he ſweeps,
Yet in the dreadful flames emboſom'd keeps
Devils and damn'd, till plunged in the deeps.
As, driv'n from the dread throne, they ling'ring ſtay,
Angels laſh devils, devils laſh their prey,
Far from his preſence, to death's dark abode,
To feel the fury of an angry God.
Dread ſhow'rs of vengeance on his foes ſhall fall,
And ev'ry frown on them diſcharge an hell;
Oceans of indignation, burning hot,
And floods of wrath, (now, ſinner, ſee thy lot),
Remain the portion of their pois'nous cup,
Which they from God for ever muſt drink up,
Yea, wring the bitter dregs of worſe than death,
Condemn'd t' abſorb the waſteleſs ſtream of wrath.
Now hell infolds them with ten thouſand flames,
And torments not diſtinguiſh'd by their names
To mortals yet!—extremes upon extremes!

The world is now diſburden'd of its load,
Which oft drew down the heavy wrath of God;
Now in the earth dwell right'ouſneſs and joy,
And nought will more offend, nor more annoy:
True peace, ſo long exil'd, returns again,
And innocence, almoſt forgot, ſprings in.
Hence Satan ſhall, chain'd to the ſhades below,
No more on earth run, reſtleſs, to and fro.

A paradiſe ſhall the eternal ſpring,
In all its blooming beauties fair, in bring.
All things are verdant, and the verdure's grace,
And the employment of the heav'ns is praiſe;
Seaſons are periſh'd, but th' eternal ſhine
Of glory forms the year, the age divine.
Thus earth's the lower heav'n, and in a tie
With heav'n united, and the throne on high;
The kingdom's to the ſaints of th' Higheſt giv'n,
And men and angels dwell in earth and heav'n.

The glorious hoſts, who all this while behold
The dread cataſtrophe, words can't unfold,
And view the wrecks of worlds, the gaſping groan
Of dying nature, the heart-melting moan
Of mortals damn'd, and fiends driv'n back again
To ſpend exiſtence in perpetual pain,
While God's right-hand unweariedly ſhall throw
His thunders on the damned ſouls below,—
Fill'd with ecſtatic joys, their grateful tongues
Praiſe the Almighty in ſeraphic ſongs:
" Beam on, eternal day, and let thy light
Dart thro' our ſouls, thrice welcome glorious height
Of love ineffable! Thy preſence, King
Of kings, for ever in thy courts we ſing.

Worlds,

Worlds, at thy word late to the flames reſign'd,
At thy command again riſe fire-refin'd.
Angels to thee their willing homage pay,
And ſhades reluctant own thy pow'rful ſway:
Hell trembles at thy look, and devils groan
Compulſive ſighs: There thou thine awful throne,
The terror of the burning gulf, doſt raiſe,
Whoſe preſence ſhall their torment eternize.
But we, the ſons of love, (whoſe bliſsful riſe
Shall laſt a wonder in our raviſh'd eyes),
Drink at the oceans of ſublimeſt bliſs,
And laud that Love,—Love that eternal is.
Before th' obedient billows learn'd to roar,
Or ſwelling ſeas to ſweep the ſandy ſhore;
Ere waters belted the vaſt world about,
Or from the earth the mountains jutted out;
Before the valley from the neighb'ring hill
Sunk deep, and rocks echo'd the murm'ring rill;
Ere fruitful fields drank up refreſhing rains,
Or morning-dews begemm'd the glitt'ring plains;
Yea, ere the ſun ſhed round the gladſome day,
Or from his chariot bloom'd the ſeaſons gay;
Love, O Eternal! was thine early thought
Tow'rds man, before thy word prolific brought
Forth fair creation, faultleſs in thine eye;
For when all things lay hid in thy decree,
Thy love propos'd and ſeal'd ſalvation-plan
With Chriſt, the Repreſentative of man
Deſign'd to be redeem'd: Th' Eternal bow'd
To be a creature, tho' he was a God.
Thus boundleſs love the atom mortal found,
And heirs of death and hell with glory crown'd.
Love's ſcatter'd ſtreams, which did refreſh below,
In boundleſs floods we ſhall for ever know:

This is his gift who our frail nature wore;
Yea, more for our infirmities he bore;
Altho' he paſs'd th' angelic nature by,
He on the human caſt a pitying eye.
Made perfect now, we feel, we fear no evil;
Not one baſe thought, or luſt, or tempting devil;
A palm, a ſceptre, hold we in our hand,
And with the Lamb upon mount Zion ſtand;
His choſen ones, mark'd with his Father's name!
His own—and ſtill our happy ſtate's the ſame.
Words can't expreſs it, yea, nor finite pow'rs;
For more than wiſh or waſting date devours,
Or thought's unbounded ſtretch can reach, is our's!"

Theſe ſcenes are over,—ſcenes auguſt, tremend;
And now is come the all-concluſive end
Of worlds and men: The twofold ſtate's begun,
Of death below, or life by Jeſus won.
At God's command, again the throne aſcends,—
Each warbling wing, each raptur'd choir attends;
Angels augmented with awaken'd duſt;
For not one ſaint is left aſleep or loſt.
What ſhining armies! what a royal band,
Before, behind, attend on ev'ry hand!
Each one's a prince, all kings, Immanuel's train,
Who journey with him thro' the azure plain,
Bright by his footſteps; all rejoice to tread,
In heav'nly order, with their living Head.
High heaven, as his approaching rays the wall
Illumine, opens to receive them all:
Its golden gates are by his beams unbarr'd,
T' admit the King of glory and his guard:
Hence heav'n and earth, in ſacred brotherhood,
Remain the manſions of the great and good,

The

The ſons of God.——

——But from theſe heights of bliſs,
Down let us plunge into the dark abyſs
Of boundleſs anguiſh; let us take a view
Of what the damn'd muſt ever undergo.
Back ſtart my thoughts, unwilling to deſcend
To theſe thick ſhades of darkneſs without end;
My ſoul into her inmoſt ſelf recoils,
And each conception, big with horror, boils.
If hell diſtreſſes men, as they relate,
Tho' diſtant, what muſt be the fixed ſtate
Of torment! where ſo many millions lie,
Beyond relief, while rolls eternity!
How dreadful are the midmoſt folds of death!
The fiery oceans of th' Eternal's wrath!
Continually new-kindled flames ariſe,
Pregnant with horrors, terrible in ſize,
Till all th' uncircumſcribed ſpace for woe
Blazes one hell, and flames ſulphureous flow.
Each breath is anguiſh, ev'ry look deſpair;
Each thought is torture; horror ev'ry where
Diffuſes; no ſerenity of mind,
To ſoothe the troubled breaſt; but ev'ry kind
Of fury rages with deſpotic reign,
And rouſes up the keeneſt ſenſe of pain.
No ſilent night, in tranquil ſoft repoſe,
Their weary eyes ſhall ever kindly cloſe;
Their eyes muſt ever wear th' affright'ning glare
Of vengeance, and for ever rueful ſtare
On others; yea, like madmen lock'd in chains,
Inflict on one another mutual pains.
The damn'd, like thoſe 'gainſt whom the pow'rful curſe
Of Heav'n deſcended, with a vengeful force,

Who

Who were, tho' 'gainſt the common en'my join'd,
'Gainſt others in inteſtine wars combin'd;
Tho' ſlain without, were maſſacred within,
Till walls were broke, their temple burnt, they ſlain:
Thus one torments another,—devils men,
And they their fellows; pain awaketh pain.
Tho' common ſuff'rers underneath the blow
Of Juſtice, yet no ſympathy they know.

In bundles bound, the old companions lie
Of wickedneſs, to nerve the tyranny
Of killing Conſcience, with the galling thought,
That they have one another's ruin wrought;
They curſe each other for their miſery,
And all their anguiſh on each other lay.
Each part doth pain itſelf, and ev'ry pow'r
Its own tormentor is for evermore;
Each faculty ſubſerves its miſery,
And ev'ry ſenſe doth ſwell the torrent high
Of growing anguiſh, thro' eternity.
If back he looks, there ſtares his impious life;
If forward, ſtraight eternal ſcenes of grief
Start up, and ſtill new floods of wrath diſcloſe;
Thus each reflection wakens all his woes;
There raging ſeas of indignation roar,
And fires, in liquid waves, confeſs no ſhore.
There blaſts of vengeance, hurricanes of wrath,
Continual blow, from God's hell-kindling breath.
There never ſport imaginary pains,
(The ſpurious offſprings of the poet's brains,)
The rolling axle, and the tumbling ſtone,
The gliding ſtream, the fruit hung tempting down;

For

For all is real, all conſummate woe,
As all the damn'd and ev'ry fiend ſhall know.
The ſoft careſſes there are flames of fire;
Deſpair's entwin'd with ev'ry ſtrong deſire;
On ev'ry hair tormenting ſerpents hang,
And reſtleſs furies twiſt with ev'ry ſtring,
And fibre of the heart. For ever nigh
Heav'ns barbed ir'ns and poiſon'd arrows fly.
What plaintive thunders, thro' th' extent of hell,
From men ſhall ſound! reverb'rate from the yell
Of furies damn'd, pale Sorrow's eldeſt ſons;
What melting murmurs, long-continu'd groans!
While creatures in conſummate miſery,
Comfortleſs, wail to all eternity!
Conceive what ſums of horror muſt be there,
When ev'ry ſoul weeps tears of ſalt deſpair.
God will not hear, God is forgetful grown,
Yea, God has ſworn that mercy ſha'n't be ſhown,
To ſuch as once contemn'd his mercy bright,
And all the offers of his love did ſlight.
The Atheiſt's taught from ev'ry nook of hell,
Yea, his own conſcience, with tormenting knell,
Confirms a God. The anguiſh he endures,
The ſacred truth in ſolemn form enſures.
The Arian owns beneath th' avenging load,
The Son of man to be the Son of God,
Equal with his eternal Father, who
Gave him to be the head of all below
To 's church; and there his bold blaſphemous tongue
Is pierced with ſharp arrows of the ſtrong.
Red dregs of vengeance fill the drunkard's cup,
And, tho' reluctant, he muſt drink them up;

There

There drunkenneſs, (here mortals' cob-web plea
For wickedneſs), ſhall highly puniſh'd be;
This janitor unlocks the door of ſin,
And ruin, death, and hell, at once ruſh in.
The ſwearer's tongue is ſet on fire of hell;
The curſe into his bones, with fury fell,
For ever pours; the oaths, in ſportſome vein,
Oft volley'd forth, ſound in his ears again;
But not as once, when ſpoke without remorſe,
But with the angry thund'rings of the curſe;
While diſtant hallelujahs ſound below,
And this the damn'd, t' augment their anguiſh, know,
That fellow-creatures, ſinners once as they,
Poſſeſs the tranſports of eternal day.
Who Sabbaths with impunity profane,
Shall count a day of reſt a world of gain;
But one calm moment juſtly are deny'd,
Fetter'd for ever to the flaming tide.
Breaſts ſwoln with pride, to thrones who did aſpire,
And, to obtain them, ſet the world on fire,
Shall, where the wand eternal vengeance ſways,
On liquid thrones of burning brimſtone riſe,
Crown'd with encircling flames; their ghaſtly guard,
Are furies, with infernal pomp prepar'd.
The perjur'd lips, devoted to the lake,
Muſt their laſt fate with the firſt liar take;
While burning coals of juniper ſhall lie
On their falſe tongue, to all eternity.

Th' apoſtate wretch, his heaven approached nigh
But loſt for ever, in his ploring eye
Shall ſpread, and every fierce reflection pain:
So leaky veſſels, on the toſſing main,

Are

Are row'd with trembling heart and tugging hand,
But row'd in vain ; they're loſt in ſight of land.
His taſting of the pow'rs of th' world to come,
With bitt'reſt gall ſhall mix his baneful doom.
For thoſe who higheſt riſe t'wards heav'n, but fall,
Shall ſink for ever in the loweſt hell.

Why various thoughts t' expreſs one pain complete ?
For all theſe torments in one boſom meet,
And many more, of which the human mind
Now can't conceive, nor, tho' conceiv'd, could find
Expreſſions proper to deſcribe the woe,
That endleſs rages in the ſhades below ;
Adult'rers, murd'rers, yea, th' ungodly all,
Weep, gnaſh their teeth, and wail for ever ſhall ;
Repent their paſſion, diſapprove their ſpleen,
And wiſh they had their ill-ſpent hours again,
T' abandon vice, at leaſt, to eſcape from pain ;
For ſin, in its effects, tho' they abhor,
Yet, in itſelf, they never can give o'er,
Till pow'rful grace the carnal mind renew,
Th' affections purge, the ſtubborn will ſubdue ;
Which never can take place in hell, a ſtate
Remedeleſs ; ſtill in vain they curſe their fate,
Their grief's conſtrain'd, repentance comes too late.

Weigh, mortal, (now immortal for thy pain),
The profit of thy time committed ſin ;
Now recollect thy then-enjoyed joy,
And thy ſharp torments ſtrive thereby t' alloy,
Bring all thine armfuls of imagin'd bliſs,
Which thou on earth didſt far prefer to this,

Throw't

Throw't in the ſcale, a balance there to be
'Gainſt all thy torment and thy miſery;
Let thy once merry moments eaſe thy ſmart,
And ſin, as once in act, rejoice thy heart;
As oft in midnight, bid them fill the bowl,
And call for wine to cheer thy fainting ſoul;
Now laugh at hell, and bid damnation come,
Who oft ſo boldly durſt invoke thy doom.—
Ah! lamentations are his ceaſeleſs ſong,
But not a drop to cool his ſcorched tongue:
He thinks not, as himſelf he oft expreſt,
Hell fab'lous, and damnation but a jeſt.
Curs'd with eternal vengeance, endleſs woe,
He feels an hell, and finds damnation true.
Devils, tho' ſpirits, feel the fire,—and men,
Altho' material, unconſum'd remain.

As we believe there is a local hell,
(Where'er it be, let dire experience tell),
So we believe there is material fire,
Since ſoul and body both tormented are:
Wrath naturally waſtes the ſoul away,
And yet the ſoul's preſerv'd a living prey;
Ev'n ſo, theſe fires of fierce calcining pow'r
Shall feed upon, but never ſhall devour
Immortal matter, doom'd, by Heav'n's decree,
Waſteleſs, to feed the flames eternally.

The pain-communicating ſympathy,
That in the damn'd exiſts t' eternity,
Sends from the ſoul to each connected pore,
Pangs, tort'ring, agoniſing evermore;

But

But thus the ſoul a ſweet retreat ſhould find,
A ſhelter, an aſylum in its kind,
If from the ſuff'ring body did not flow
Tremendous torrents of diſtracting woe,
Which preſs ſeverely on the ſtruggling ſoul,
That does 'fore each returning ſurge recoil:
Thus mutually they both tormented are,
Each ſeeks relief, but neither finds it there;
And 'tis but juſt, ſince both in ſin did ſhare.

In hell (how horrid is the dire abode!)
There's not one honourable thought of God;
They fear with fury, and with hatred quake,
And at his name their troubled centres ſhake.
What heart can think, what tongue their torments tell,
Whoſe 'waken'd conſcience is a very hell!

Satan receives the heav'n-inflicted blow,
He falls, and groans, beneath o'erwhelming woe;
Enrag'd his malice can effect no more,
Than ſcourging hell into blaſphemous roar
Againſt the juſt, but the tremendous One,
Who throws the thunders of his vengeance down.
Eternal howlings all the damn'd employ,
And anguiſh preys upon the ſons of joy,
Who revel'd from their cradle to their tomb,
Without one thought of death, or wrath to come.

All is one unaugmentable extreme!
Wrath's uttermoſt, eternally the ſame,—
Wrath's uttermoſt that finite creatures can
Endure,—or angels fall'n, or damned man:

If 'twixt extremes ſome moments came between,
This would ſuppoſe a ſhort reſpite from pain;
But to the damn'd 'tis utterly deny'd,
Whoſe puniſhment is all one flowing tide,
Without an ebb—one teem of vengeance down,—
One ſtorm of fury from the fiery throne.

There, to their torments to bring freſh ſupply,
The Law, in all its curſes ſpread, doth lie.
Law-ſtrengthen'd ſin, enabled to devour,
With Law's condemning and accurſing pow'r,
Lies very heavy on the damned ſoul,
And wounds, and ſlays, and rends, and tears her whole.
Law takes the trumpet, roars eternal death,
Loud in the ear of ev'ry heir of wrath:
Awaken'd conſcience echoes the alarm,
Whoſe thunders nothing ſhall to ſilence charm.

The bleeding Saviour hung upon the tree,—
Offer'd, deſpis'd, contemn'd, rejected He!
Grace trampled down reaches the loudeſt knell,
And goſpel-ſinners have the hotteſt hell.

But, ah! this is not all, the worſt's behind,—
That want, that void, that emptineſs of mind,—
That ſeeking, lacking, craving *ſomething* gone,
Something their heav'n, their all depends upon.
When at the firſt God formed man upright,
(As all things then were perfect in his ſight),
A principle He planted in his mind,
Which only for Heav'n's fav'rites was deſign'd,
A conſtant, reſtleſs tendency of ſoul
Tow'rds God, who was his firſt, his laſt, his all;—

That

That if his works he view'd at home, abroad,
He by them, thro' them, ſtill arriv'd at God:
Then all creation owned man its king,
And man to God did the grand tribute bring;
Reſiſtleſs, all his bleſs'd affections flow'd
On God, his chief, his all-ſufficient good,
With ſuch a rapid force and ſacred glow,
That nothing could compare to it below:
The courſe of nature was but faint to this,
The forward ſtream to find its deep abyſs;
The ſun, aſcending with amazing might,
To higheſt heav'ns, to give meridian light;
Th' attracted needle, trembling ſtill about,
Reſtleſs to find its pole, its centre out:
All ſhort of this, while innocent he ſtood,
Deſtroy the man, or give him his chief good:
And ſuch was happy Adam's boundleſs bliſs,
His heav'n below, his joy, his paradiſe,
Till by his fall he loſt the ſacred ſum
Of ſolid comfort, in whoſe room did come
Diſquietude, and ev'ry racking woe
That ſeizes on the ſons of men below.
Hence mortals are conſum'd with care and toil,
For ſomething to ſuffice a craving ſoul,
That's always ſeeking, never finding reſt,
But raiſing tempeſts in a troubled breaſt.
Some riches chaſe, and others fame purſue,
And pleaſures are the prize of not a few;
Whence, if obtain'd, a ſatisfaction flows
To carnal minds, that lulls in ſad repoſe
Poor thoughtleſs ſouls, who dream that all's at peace,
And ſpend their careleſs hours in curſed eaſe,—

Yea, praiſe their ſtate, pronouncing all is right;
Nor wake—till plung'd in everlaſting night:
Then ſuddenly the images retire,
Nor can the objects of their blind deſire
Breathe in the burning element of fire.
Their all is loſt, and nothing left behind,
But the dark void ſpread in their ſuff'ring mind.
As the touch'd needle trembles to the pole,
When falſe attractions fly,—even ſo the ſoul,
So long aſleep, when ſhe awakes again,
The principle revives, that would amain
Return to God;—but ah! it muſt not be,
Between the ſoul and God there's enmity
For ever fix'd; and this ſhall ſharp her pain,
That fain ſhe would, but can't be friends again;
She would, but,—ah! 'tis from neceſſity,
Not out of choice; for ſtill an enmity
'Gainſt God with fury burneth in her breaſt,
At once would find, yet fly the Rock of reſt:
Thus, all the anguiſh of a ſoul at war
Within itſelf, for ever tortures there.
This all their torment ſums, that God is gone;—
Then let him go, and never more be known;
Ah! ſtill he dwells, altho' not in their mind,
Yet in the void his abſence leaves behind,
Their worſt tormentor; could their knowledge die
Of Him, anon ſhould end their miſery,
And they in flames quite unconcern'd could lie.
The hotteſt hell is in this very thought,
(Conſcious that bliſs alone from him is brought),
That God is loſt, and never will be found
Of them in peace, but throws his terrors round.

Their

Their need implores him, but implores in vain ;
For days of grace, when paſt, to ſouls in pain,
Appear no more ; hope never dawns again.
Thus God is (tho' he keeps his ſacred throne)
Gone in his favour, preſent in his frown ;
Gone in his pity, preſent in his pow'r ;
Gone in his mercy, preſent to devour ;
Gone in his love, but preſent in his wrath ;
Preſent to eternize their deathleſs death.
Such is the puniſhment of loſs, and hence
Perpetual ſprings the puniſhment of ſenſe.

Now leave them in conſummate miſery,
Till ages numberleſs have roll'd away ;
To bring the bound that ſhall their anguiſh cloſe,
The long-expected period of their woes ;
In vain they wait, in vain for ever will,
Eternity is but beginning ſtill ;
Unlimited extenſion, viewleſs view,
Dread pointleſs circle, everlaſting now !

Alas ! thought I, is this the final ſtate
Of Fame's firſt-born, now in the world ſo great ?
Muſt purpled kings, from their tremendous throne,
For all their honours, tumble headlong down ?
And, plunged in the darkeſt, deepeſt hell,
In torments, claſs'd with vileſt ſpectres, yell ?
Muſt thoſe who, fearleſs, on the foaming flood,
True to their country and their truſt have ſtood,
And conqueſt with contending courage fought,
Till bravely gain'd, tho' dearly ſold and bought,
Yet lie in chains for ever, vengeance' ſlave,
And, full of fury, in their torments rave ?

Muſt warriors, after all their vict'ries won,
Yield loud applauſes for a penſive groan?
And, toſſing on the burning billows, lie,
Shut up in darkneſs to eternity?

Now wearied with ranſacking ſcenes of woe,
(Of which, at moſt, we but ſmall portions know),
I ceaſe to ſearch; I dare no farther go.
Oppreſs'd with ſhades, my thoughts would fain take flight,
And fain retire from this eternal night;
From hov'ring o'er the burning gulph below,
My ſtruggling thoughts, to a diviner flow
Of bliſs take wing;—heav'n beauteous ſpread around,
With ſpotleſs glories, in perfection found.
All heav'n's in ſong, the ſong's all ecſtacy;
Each ſoul is life and rapture; ev'ry eye
Feeds on the glories of Emmanuel's face,
And ſacred perſon, full of truth and grace.
At once I'm charm'd with the melodious voice;
Dejection now exults, my groans rejoice.

All heav'n reſounds with harmony divine,
And all the hoſts drink of the ſpiced wine,
Prepar'd by GRACE, and poured out by LOVE,
To glad the gueſts at Glory's board above;
With whom for ever, in his robes of ſtate,
The King of heav'n, to crown the feaſt, doth ſit.

The ſaints whom ſinners oft on earth made ſad,
In heav'n, angelic company ſhall glad.
Hoſts of archangels, cherubs, ſeraphims,
And all the active, ever-living flames

Of

Of ſpotleſs beings, and the ranſom'd throng,
Shall mingle in one univerſal ſong
Of praiſe to him of whom the family
Of heav'n and earth is nam'd, while kindly he
Diſplays his glory, in divineſt beams,
And pours out all his love, in living ſtreams;
At which the ſaints, with ſouls enlarging, lie,
And drink up draughts of immortality,
To ſtrengthen them for all thoſe weights of bliſs,
Which, as they ſhare, ay more and more increaſe.
Such is the nature of the joys that flow
From his right-hand, that they for ever grow.
Day ſhines perpetual; and, in ev'ry beam,
On glad beholders boundleſs glories teem.
All's mental ecſtacy, harmonious lays,
Cherubic notes, ſeraphic ſtrains of praiſe;
Angelic joys, raptures divinely ſweet,
Where all the glories of the Godhead meet,
Communicable to the heirs, the ſons
Of God, who reign on high-exalted thrones,
Thrones 'ſtabliſh'd on the faithfulneſs of God,
And founded on the glorious crimſon flood
Of Jeſus Chriſt's all-meritorious blood.

There, 'mongſt them all, God's well-beloved Son,
Crown'd with the laurels of his vict'ries won,
As King of kings, ſits on his higheſt throne:
While round about the heav'nly multitude,
(The coſtly purchaſe of his precious blood),
Attend enthron'd, and caſt their crowns before
This mighty Lord, whom proſtrate hoſts adore.
His ſacred beams ſhed bright eternal day,
And all his ſaints ſit baſking in his ray;

Beams,

Beams, that an heav'n of perfect bliſs impart,
And raiſe ten thouſand raptures in the heart.

They magnify his moſt renowned name,
And emulate with ſeraphs in their flame;
Yea, claim to him of nearer kin to be,
By blood and bond, than all the hoſts on high.

There brooks of honey, ſtreams ecſtatic, flow,
Which make the ſaints forget their griefs below:
They drink, and are as happy and ſerene
In ſoul, as they had always angels been;
Yea, from their life, (when Providence's maze,
Explain'd, the ſweeteſt harmony diſplays),
Songs to that Pow'r their grateful ſpirits ſing,
Who ſafe did thro' ſo many dangers bring
To bliſs; yea, at death's overflowing flood,
To part the waves, their Prieſt anointed ſtood;
Th' obedient waves retir'd on either hand,
And gave them entrance to the promis'd land,
Along the pearl-ſtraw'd walks and banks of love;
The king's high-way to glory's courts above.

The wiſe philoſopher ſhall ceaſe t' explore
(A work of pleaſure oft purſu'd before)
Fair nature, in her ſecret laws and ſprings,
Now buſied ſtudying much diviner things,
God in himſelf—Jehovah in his Son;
With all the ſecrets of his nature ſhown;
Perfections num'rous as the ſtars above,
And venting man-ward in a ſtream of love;
Eternal glories, treaſures never ſeen,
Nor once conceiv'd, and wonders all divine:

Arriv'd

Arriv'd at length, 'bove all his works, at Him,
He is their laſt, their everlaſting theme:
No more the creatures in their themes excel,
While they on the Creator's fulneſs dwell:
The index of his glory ſpreads no more,
While the great folio open lies before,
To be for ever read, where Gabriel's loſt,
And all the rabbis of th' angelic hoſt.
There paradiſe is in eternal bloom;
The ſpring, the ſummer, and the autumn come;
Three ſeaſons fair:—three fairer ſeaſons ſee;—
A ſpring of undiſturb'd tranquillity;
A ſmiling ſummer of ſereneſt joy,
Which winter-ſtorms ſhall never more annoy;
A loaded autumn of eternal love,
Where flow'rs and apples ſtraw the fields above.

The humble Saviour's highly honour'd there;
And all the ſtrife is, who ſhall moſt revere
The dear, divine Redeemer; who ſhall pay
The higheſt praiſes to the Prince of day,
Who days of grace and years of glory gives,
Yea, life eternal, ſince he ever lives.

Emmanuel's ever dear, adored name,
Sounds in each ſong, and burns in ev'ry flame;
Glads ev'ry tongue, and raptures ev'ry ear,
And doth on ev'ry forehead ſtamp'd appear.

The travail of his ſuff'ring ſoul he'll ſee,
And ſhall be ſatisfy'd t' eternity;
While round about a whole exulting throng,
Join in one gen'ral, in one grateful ſong,

To

To Him who kindly did the ranſom pay,
And made them heirs of all the bliſs on high.
Th' aſſembly thus, the church of the firſt-born,
Triumphant reigns above the roſy morn,
Where dawning knowledge, and the twilight thought
Concerning God, is to the noonday brought
Of pure intelligence, and they, (O bliſs!)
Know as they're known, and ſee him as he is.
All think as angels, all as ſeraphs praiſe,
And ſofteſt numbers form their ſweeteſt lays.

If to a kingdom heaven we compare,
Its privileges moſt amazing are:
There ev'ry ſubject is a king, whoſe ſway
Shall, uncontroul'd, reign thro' eternity:—
All wait about the KING,—all courtiers are;—
No ruſtic ſwain does diſtance great debar
From glory;—all the King in perſon ſee;
Which viſion is their bliſs, their heav'n on high.
If to a ſky,—each ſaint ſhines as a ſtar,
Or brighter ſtill, for ſome as ſuns appear.
If coronation-days moſt pomp diſplay,
Eternity's one coronation-day.
Then what muſt be the total ſum of bliſs,
Which faintly various metaphors expreſs!
An houſe, an heav'n, a kingdom, and a ſky,—
A ſtate of joy, life, immortality!

Hold, Muſe!—That glory ſo tranſcendent is,
We'd bluſh to own our preſent thoughts of bliſs,
When thither rapt, where heav'n more fair appears,
Than angel-tongues could tell in human ears.

God

God is enjoy'd;—Jehovah, in his Son,
Sheds all his never-fading glories down;
Saints, ſtrengthen'd with his life-conveying rays,
Still brighten in th' aſſimilating blaze,
And raiſe, with rapture on their warbling tongues,
To the Eternal's name ecſtatic ſongs.

Replete with glory, ev'ry ſoul o'erflows,
And, raviſh'd with eternal tranſport, glows;
God dwells in ev'ry breaſt, and bliſs unknown,
From ſuch a gueſt, in living ſtreams runs down.

All's life, and light, and viſion eye to eye,
Fruition full, communion free and nigh,
Eternal ſong and everlaſting day,
Immortal youth, and ſtrength without decay;
Joys tranſports, raptures, pleaſures all ſerene,
Unnumber'd glories, ecſtacies divine;
And ſuch a bliſs, (no creature knows the whole),
Flows unconfin'd while endleſs ages roll.

Then, reader, make this matchleſs glory thine,
And ſeek thy portion in this bliſs divine.——
So now, farewell, till we ſhall meet again,
At the laſt day, to witneſs this great ſcene!
A moment yet,—the ſure dilemma ſee,—
Glory or vengeance muſt thy portion be.
Two words divide the world,—the *goats*, the *sheep*:
Know'ſt thou thy flock? and can'ſt thou careleſs ſleep?
Two words the mingling crowds ſhall ſep'rate far,
Come ye,—*go ye*,—from Heav'n's tremendous bar.
Awake in time, and ſtrictly try thy ſtate;
This can't be done too ſoon, but may too late:

For

For life's a dream, where pleaſing phantoms play,
Which we purſue through time's deluſive day,
Till, poiſon'd by intoxicating ſin,
In arms of curs'd ſecurity we're ſlain,
Where thouſands ſleep, ſtill dreaming all is well,
Nor wake, till ſcorched by the flames of hell.

View the two ſcales,—eternity in one,
In th' other, moments ſcarce obſerv'd till gone.
In mem'ry keep the laſt deciſive day,
And the great ſcene for ever in thine eye.
That day approaches ;—yield, and kiſs the Son,
Ere his wrath kindle, or thy day be done.
Awake to future worlds, and live to die,
Then die, to live to all eternity.

FINIS.

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